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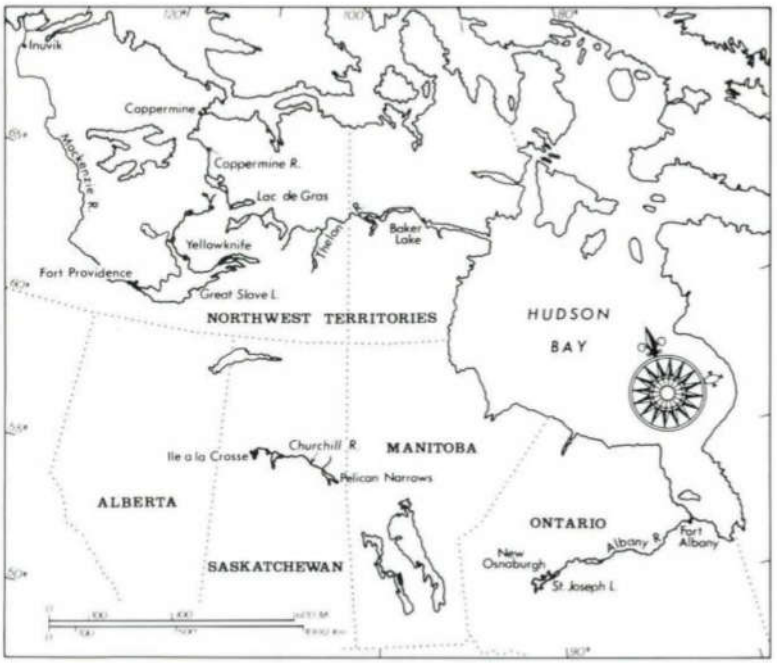

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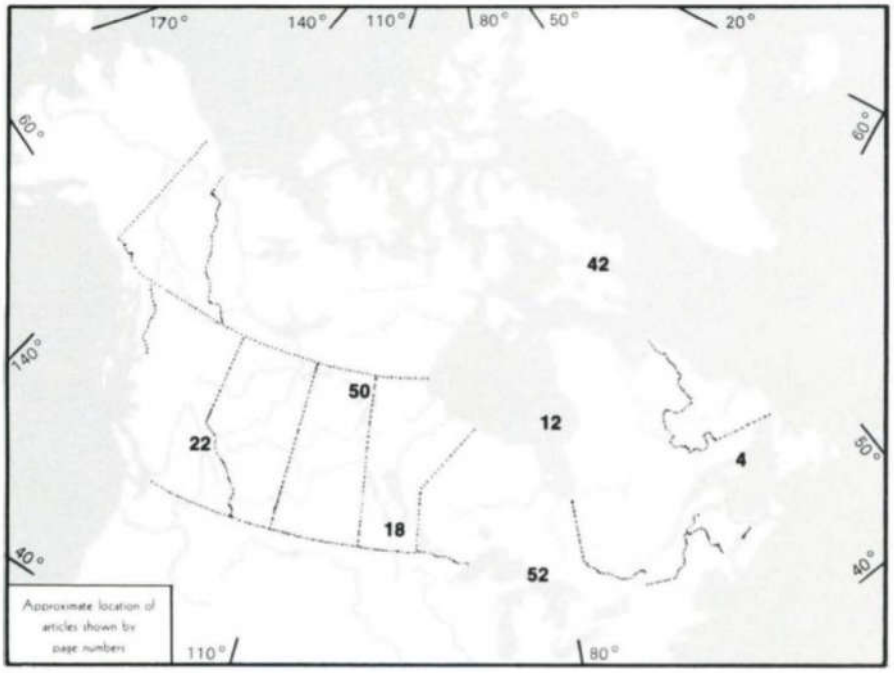

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COVER: 'Coastal Violence Series #1', by artist Ron Bolt of Toronto. Acrylic on canvas, 37¼" x 38".

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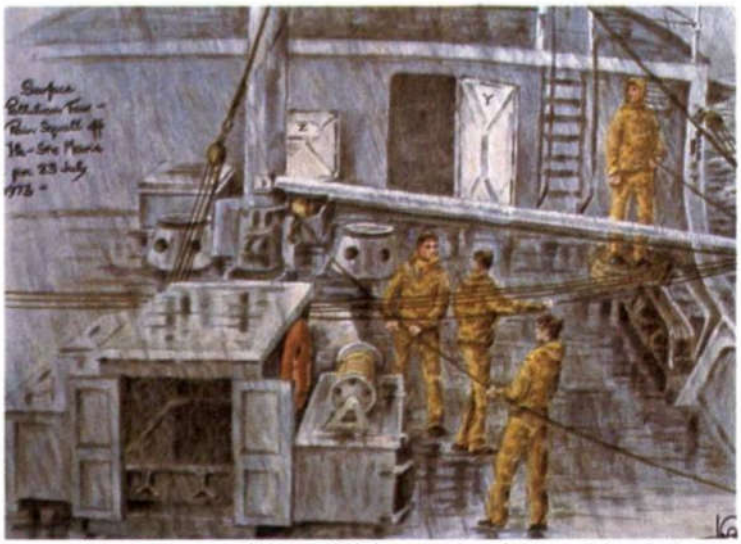
The North Shore

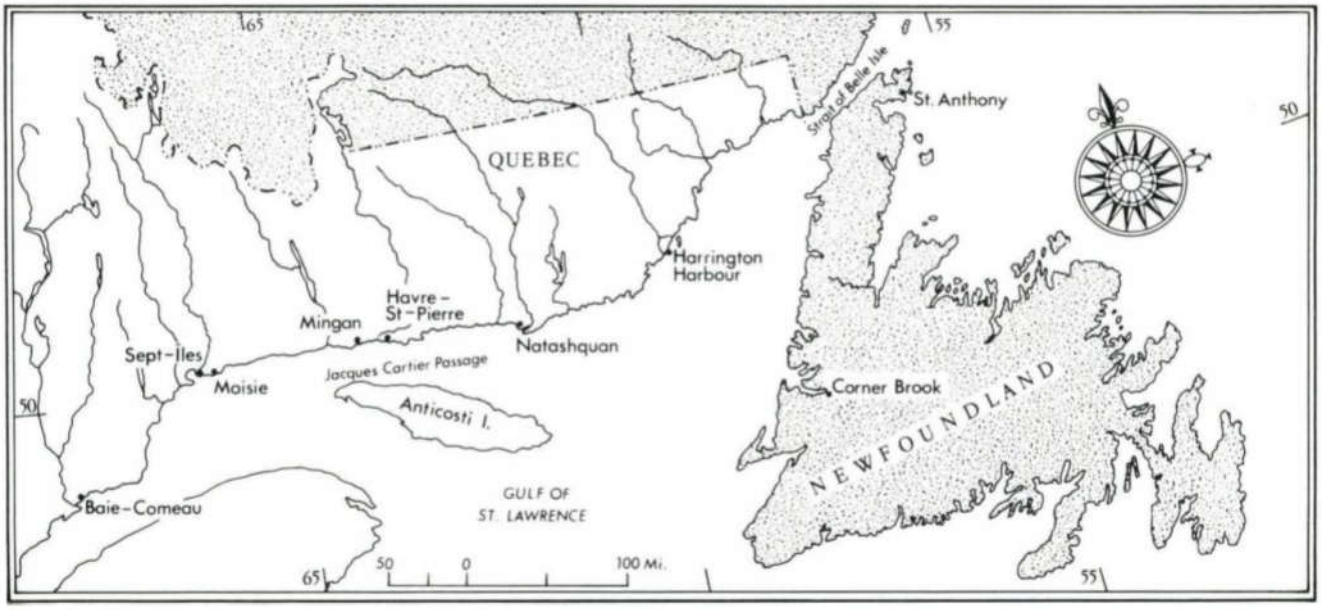
F. R. Berchem

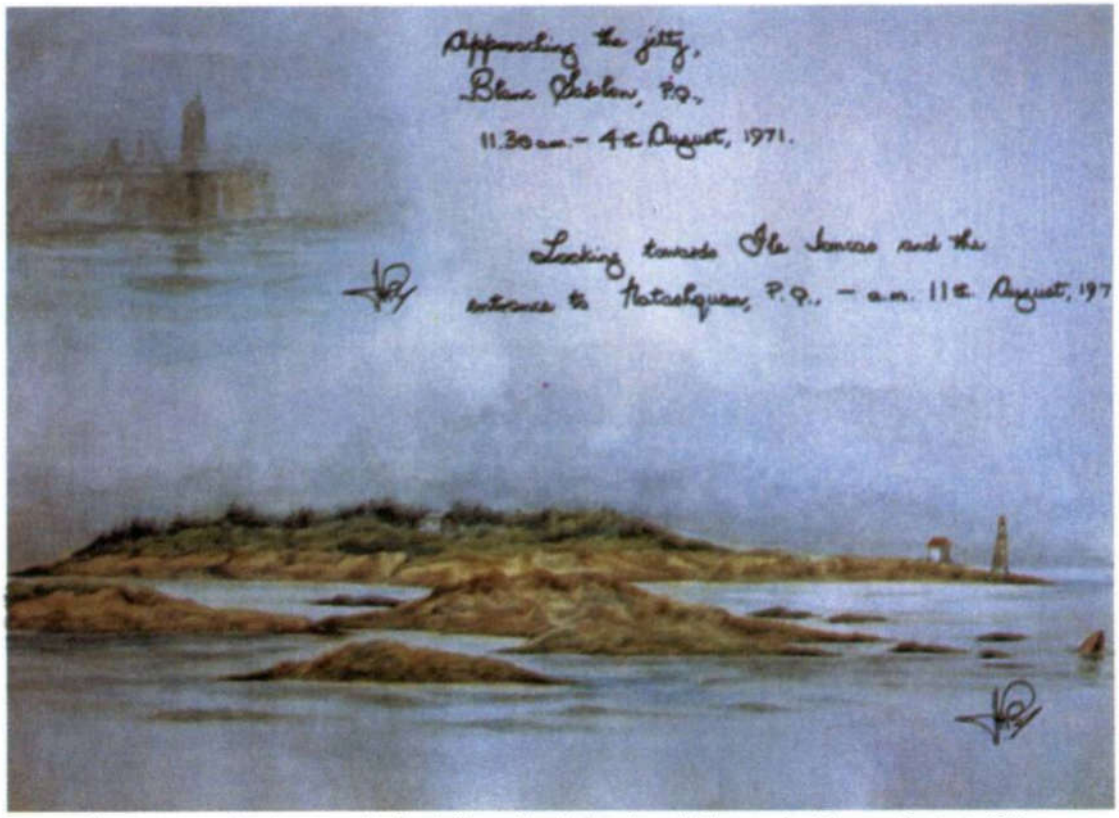
Captain Berchem, a graduate in history (M.A.) from the University of Toronto, is Master of a survey vessel on the Great Lakes. He is author and illustrator of 'The Yonge Street Story: 1793-1860' (McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1977) and is now writing a book dealing with the ship operations of the Hudson's Bay Company based on the diaries of his father who served on Company ships 1916-1930, mainly as first officer on the 'Nascopie'.

This feature is from Berchem's 'Scraps from the Labrador' to be published in 1982 by Breakwater Books of St. John's, Newfoundland. Water-colours are by the author.



Scenes aboard the two 'Gate' type vessels under Captain Berchem's command. In the summers of 1971 to 1973 these vessels took Major Robert Bridgeman to outports along the Labrador coast where he was in charge of the Ranger Program. The ships also carried out surface pollution tows, as shown, right.




Approaching the jetty,
Blanc Sablon, P.Q.,
11.30 a.m. - 4th August, 1971.
Looking towards Ile Jumeau and the
entrance to Natashquan, P.Q., - a.m. 11th August, 197

The entrance to Natashquan on the North Shore. Here Indians boarded the vessels of Jacques Cartier in 1534.

WHEN THE TIRED, asthmatic old HMC Ships *Porte St Jean* and *Porte St Louis* sailed from Corner Brook, Newfoundland, to wallow down to the Labrador for a third summer in 1973, we set off on a tack north-west to Harrington Harbour before heading east through the Strait of Belle Isle to St Anthony, south of Cape Bauld.

The purpose of the voyage was to take Major Robert Bridgeman of The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada to out-ports along the Labrador coast where he was in charge of the Ranger Program. The local Rangers provided him with information on their areas and reported any unusual incidents along their part of the coast. They were not paid money, but as a practical measure, with hunting being a vital part of their lives, each was provided with a rifle and so many rounds of ammunition each year, the rifle being turned in annually for replacement.

My role in the expedition was to command the two small naval ships that transported the Major on his summer rounds. We had to furnish naval authorities in Halifax with any information we could provide on the areas visited and their naval limitations, and we also carried out surface pollution tows to collect water samples for the Bedford Institute at Dartmouth, Nova Scotia.

In our two previous years we had trailed along the north shore of the Gulf west of Harrington Harbour to Natashquan, Havre St Pierre, Mingan, and on to Sept Iles and Baie Comeau. We had also passed close along the north coast of Anticosti Island, through the strait still known as Jacques Cartier Passage, but didn't put in to any place on the island because we had not the permission that is necessary before anyone can land there.

A long-neglected part of the coast, the North Shore has an interesting history as the route for the early European explorers and traders. The small, rock-girt harbour of Natashquan was once known to the French as the place 'where the seals land'.

Cartier, when he first saw walrus in that part of the Gulf in 1534, described them as 'fish in appearance like horses which go on land at night'. While his ships were off Natashquan Point, he recorded that:

> On this point we saw smoke rising from fires that the inhabitants of the coast were making at that spot . . . some twelve Indians set off in two canoes, and came as freely on board our vessels as if they had been Frenchmen.

The Indians who lived in those parts were probably Montagnais who, through their link with the

Adelaide Leitch

A Montagnais Indian mother wearing the traditional hat and hair style of the North Shore Indian women, c. 1955. Wooden pegs in the hair are wrapped with black braid.

Algonquin, had a trade established with the Huron on distant Georgian Bay — an association that no doubt helped to draw them into alliance with the French during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

It was at Natashquan, while making a hydrographic survey of the Gulf of St Lawrence for the British Admiralty, that Captain H. W. Bayfield, Royal Navy, met Mr John James Audubon, the famous American artist and naturalist. The ever-meticulous Bayfield left a brief note of that occasion on 22 June 1833:

> Mr. Audubon the naturalist we found here in the American schooner *Ripley*, with several young men, two of them being medical students. Mr. Audubon has come principally to study the habits of the water fowl, with which the coast of Labrador abounds, and to make drawings of them for his splendid work on the birds of America. We found him a very superior person indeed. On returning Mr. Audubon's visit, was delighted with his drawings, the birds being represented of life size and beautifully painted. Mr. Audubon dined on board the *Gulnare*. It is said there are 300 vessels employed in the fisheries on this coast, averaging 75 tons each, and manned by 50 men to each six vessels, equal of 2,500 men. Of these, one half are French, one fourth British and the rest Americans. Each vessel takes away on an average, 1,500 quintals of codfish, at 112 pounds per quintal. The fish average about 4 pounds each in weight, being small on this coast.

Bayfield also recorded another commercial enterprise in the same locality, the trade in guillemots' eggs:

> We heard from the Americans about the Eggers, a set of people, we, to-day, first heard of spoken of as a body. We had previously no idea of the extent of the egging business, as our informants termed it. It appears that, in some seasons, 20 small schooners or shallops, of 20 to 30 tons, load with eggs from this coast. Halifax is the principal market for them, where they at times fetch a much higher price than hens' eggs. . . . One vessel of 25 tons is said to have cleared £200 by this egging business in a favorable season.

Audubon, as might be expected in a naturalist, reacted to the Eggers with much more emotion than the prosaic Bayfield:

> For a week each night is passed in drunkenness and brawls, until, having reached the last breeding place on the coast, they return, touch at every isle in succession, shoot as many birds as they need, collect the fresh eggs and lay in a cargo. At every step each ruffian picks up an egg so beautiful that any man with a feeling heart would pause to consider the motive which could induce him to carry it off. . . .The dollars alone chink in his sordid mind.

Our visits to Natashquan had been very brief on each occasion in 1971 and 1972, and I never found time for more than an afternoon's walk ashore. It was a predominantly French-speaking community of some four hundred people, descended, no doubt, in large part from the Acadian fishermen who had come there between 1857-61 from the Magdalen Islands, to which their ancestors had fled during the French-English feuds in the 1750s.

I saw no sign of the Hudson's Bay post that had been opened there in 1927, but presumed that The Bay store was its successor. In fact, I should have liked more time in which to look around and get some feeling for the place, but I had time only for a quick water-colour sketch of the rock-riddled harbour entrance and the light on Ile Joncas.

After soundings had been taken in the area of the jetty for a report on the harbour, and as soon as the Major returned from his Ranger visits ashore, we would be on our way out of Natashquan, of which we reported in 1971 that:

> There are numerous rocks at the entrance to Natashquan harbour which present a jumbled picture on radar. . . . When berthing care should be exercised concerning the shoaling water south

Hudson's Bay Company Archives

'A view of Mingan Harbour, taken in the month of July, 1859.'

of the jetty, particularly the five-foot patch marked on the chart.

It was of no comfort to know that the precise and expert surveyor Bayfield had 'touched upon a rock' when leaving Little Natashquan Harbour, although he was not aground 'more than a minute or two'.

From Natashquan in 1972 we headed along the North Shore past Havre St Pierre to fabled Mingan, once the farthest point west reached by the Inuit of Labrador, and later home of the Montagnais Indians. The deserted, solid-structured wooden jetty, jutting into the strong current that funnelled between it and the off-shore islands, and the stretches of white sand and scrub gave Mingan a bare, desolate look. The small Roman Catholic chapel, one of the first to be established in Canada, and looking in its compact neatness like a feature from an architect's model, seemed to emphasize that desolation.

A few Indians came down to the ship to sell moccasins and other hand-crafted wares. They seemed like survivors from a history that had left no shadow at Mingan, although the place had known its violent moments in the feuds of Montagnais and Inuit, and in the long-drawn-out struggle between French and English for control of North America's wealth in furs and fish. Mingan was one of the prizes in the fisheries contest.

It was in westward pursuit of the fur trade that the Governor of New France, Frontenac, sent the explorer Louis Jolliet to find a way to the 'South Sea'. Jolliet, accompanied by the Jesuit Father Marquette, set out from Michilimackinac on northern Lake Huron to explore the Mississippi in May 1673.

'In consideration of his discovery of the Illinois country', Jolliet received the fiefdom of Anticosti Island in March 1680. During the summer of that same year, King Louis XIV of France ratified a grant by the Intendant Duchesneau making Jolliet and his wife's stepfather, Jacques de la Lande, the co-seigneurs of Mingan:

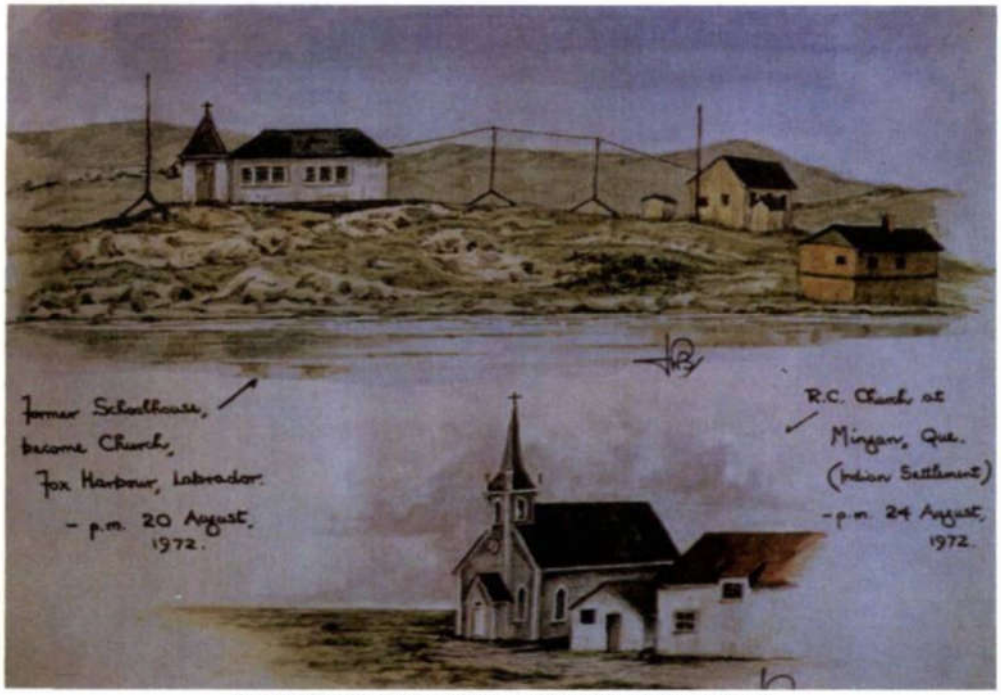
> en titre de fief, Siegneurie, haulte, Moyenne et Basse Justice, Les Isles et Islets appellee Mingan etans de Coste du Nord, et qui se suivent jusqu'à la Baye appellée Lance aux Espagnols.

Along with these holdings that stretched from the Mingan Islands along the North Shore of the Gulf to the area of Bradore went permission to set up cod and seal fisheries on the islands, a prosperous but precarious prospect at that time.

Jolliet's post at Mingan was raided in 1690 by the English, who carried off his wife, mother-in-law and goods worth some 10,000 francs; two years later they razed all his buildings at Mingan and Seven Islands. This did not discourage Jolliet, however, and he rebuilt his post at Mingan before setting out on his second voyage to Labrador in the summer of 1694.

Henry Beckles Willson makes the statement in his book on Donald Smith *The Life of Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal* that in the middle of the eighteenth century, because of difficulties with the Mingan seigneur, the Hudson's Bay Company had to settle for a post on Havre Island of the Mingan group, rather than at Mingan itself. There does not appear to be any evidence for this, however, in the files of the Hudson's Bay Company.

The Mingan possessions changed hands several times, and it was not until February 1836 that the Hudson's Bay Company purchased the entire fief and seigniory of Mingan from Woolsey and Lymburner, the heirs of John Richardson of the North West Fur Company. The Hudson's Bay Company later sold one of the islands, Perroquet, to the Canadian government in November 1920.



Fox Harbour and the small Roman Catholic chapel at Mingan, one of the first to be established in Canada.

'Devant le camp'. A Montagnais woman at Moisie c. 1978. An oil painting (30" x 40") by André Michel who paints and sketches the Indian people of the North Shore.

A Mr James McKenzie, writing in 1808, gives the impression that Mingan, among others, was a King's Post of the North West Company of Fur Traders. These King's Posts were ones that were leased to that company by the British Government. Again there is only vague evidence that Mingan was, in fact, a King's Post, although it was certainly in the same North West Company administrative district as some of those posts.

The assumption that Mingan was not a King's Post is based on the certain fact that the Hudson's Bay Company could not take a lease of such posts prior to 1842. Consequently the argument runs that if it had been a King's Post it would have been subject to the restrictions of the lease, and so not available for sale to the Hudson's Bay Company in 1836, when the posts were still under lease to a 'John Goudie, Ship-builder'.

A minor confusion, perhaps, but complicated by the fact that nobody seemed to know the exact limits of the territory included in the purchase of the entire 'fief and seigniory' of Mingan. As late as May 1876, Donald Smith, later Lord Strathcona, would be writing to the Secretary of the Hudson's Bay Company in London to say that:

> it has been found difficult to define the limits of this seigniory of the Isles and Islets of Mingan, as the place called L'Anse aux Espagnols is not now

The Hudson's Bay Company's fox farm on the Mingan Islands, c. 1930.

known under that name, but in a document of the 10th July, 1709, found among the deeds of the seigniory, these islets are given as extending from L'Isle aux Oeufs to Blanc Sablons, a distance of over three hundred miles along the north shore of the St. Lawrence. This would appear to settle the question of boundary.

It did nothing of the sort. Smith, the crafty old Caledonian, was making good use of a claim made by Jolliet's heirs several years after the initial grant of land for the purposes of seal and cod fishing. Their claim lumped with the original concession, the hundred miles of coast between Seven Islands and Mingan, and then added to that the stretch between Seven Islands and Egg Island as being the inheritance of Jolliet's wife; a considerable expansion of the Mingan fief as granted by Duchesneau.

Donald Smith had spent the first seven years of his service in the Hudson's Bay Company at Godbout, Seven Islands, Bersimis and Mingan, before going on to Rigolet on the Atlantic coast. Although his house at Mingan burned down, he seems to have enjoyed the place as having 'the best harbour on the coast, owing to the islands shielding it from the winds', but he showed a remarkable lack of enthusiasm for the Montagnais inhabitants.

By 1972 all traces of that early history had vanished, except for the little chapel and the Montagnais themselves. The Hudson's Bay Company tried a new, short-lived venture in 1929 when it established a white-fox fur farm on Esquimaux Island of the Mingan group. My father noted briefly in his records that in August 1930, 'before leaving Port Harrison [the Hudson's Bay Company's ship *Nascopie*] took aboard sixteen pairs of live foxes for the Company's fox fur farm on the Mingan Islands'. That enterprise, too, has faded into the past.

Jolliet's other fiefdom, Anticosti Island, became one of the balls in the territorial ping-pong match begun in October 1763 with the Proclamation that gave Captain Thomas Graves, Governor of Newfoundland, jurisdiction over:

> [The] Island of Newfoundland, and all the coast of Labrador, from the entrance of Hudson's Straits to the River St. John's, which discharges itself into the sea, nearly opposite the west end of the Island of Anticosti, including that Island, with any other small Islands on the said coast of Labrador, and also the Islands of Madelaine in the Gulf of St. Lawrence.

The Quebec Act of 1774 returned Labrador to Quebec; then in 1809 it went back to Newfoundland. This continuous French-English contest between Quebec and Newfoundland was kept going by an 1826 decision to alter the western boundary of Labrador to a meridian running from Blanc Sablon northward to 52° latitude.

After a century of wrangling, the 1927 Privy Council decision on the Labrador boundary did little to quiet the rumblings from Quebec, although the Magdalen Islands remained with that province, to which they belong today. A year earlier Anticosti Island had been sold by its owner, Gaston Meunier, to the pulp and paper interests of the Anticosti Corporation for $6,500,000. By 1971, the wood-cutting operations on the Anticosti had virtually ceased, and a few years later the government of Quebec pushed proposals to incorporate Anticosti in the province.

Between 1912 and 1921 a familiar feature of the Anticosti coast was the lightship, the old C.G.S. *Arctic* that had originally been a German three-masted tops'l schooner with an auxiliary engine, built for Drygalski's Antarctic Expedition in 1901. The

vessel was bought by the Canadian Government and became famous under the command of Captain Joseph Elzear Bernier.

My father remembers Bernier as 'a queer old duck,' droop-moustached and taciturn. He had Canada flashes on the shoulders of his uniform jacket, and these were the source of a favourite remark by old Captain Mack of the *Nascopie*, 'Me an' Canadawr are takin' over the Arctic.'

After her years as a lightship, the *Arctic* went north again in 1921, to Pond's Inlet where a depot for the Royal Canadian Mounted Police was established.

The posting of a lightship off Anticosti was long overdue, although better late than never, to judge from the toll of ships that struck on the island's shores. Captain Bayfield, who surveyed the island during the summer of 1829, left the following laconic note of its grim history.

> Found that the wreck on West Point is the *Hibernia*, a merchant brig, whose master had died here of fatigue and is buried on the island. We were informed that another vessel, a barque, got ashore about 20 miles to the south-east, and that about half her crew had perished. This, added to the crew and passengers of the *Granicus*, who all perished miserably from cold and hunger after eating each other, is tolerably well for one year.

Further along the North Shore, west of Anticosti, what had once been another of Jolliet's possessions, Seven Islands, was a booming town in the 1970s, a glaring contrast to Mingan. Cartier visited Seven Islands and nearby Moisie during his second trip to North America in 1535, when he made his way up the St Lawrence as far as the Indian settlement of Hochelaga. Sept-Iles he named wrongly, there being only six actual islands opposite the harbour; but the peninsula of Seven Islands Bay looks like an island from some distance off. Hence Cartier's mistake.

In the summer of 1973 I found the village of Moisie being torn down, a havoc of worn timbers and dunnage. Seven Islands, however, that twenty years before had been a small fishing village with a little over a thousand inhabitants, had rocketed to a population of thirty thousand. This boom has been the result of the iron ore mined in the hinterland and brought down to the docks at Sept-Iles by the Quebec North Shore and Labrador Railway, completed in February 1954.

In the harbour approaches lie massive, modern, bulk-carrying ships, some over 100,000 tons, waiting to move into the loading berths from which the first shipment of Ungava iron ore had left on the *Hawaiian* at the end of July 1954; a far cry indeed from Cartier's little ships, and his exchange of 'knives, glass beads, combs and other trinkets of small value' for a few furs.

On leaving Corner Brook for Harrington Harbour on 23 July 1973, the job of the two vessels was to carry out surface pollution tows to collect samples of water from which the degree of pollution could be worked out by the Oceanographic Research people in the Bedford Institute at Dartmouth, Nova Scotia.

The pollution tows were carried out by fitting a small cylinder in the end of a narrow, mesh streamer like a very long butterfly net that was then heaved over the side to stream from the foremast boom swung out at right angles to the path of the ship. After a twelve-minute tow, heading into the wind at five knots, the container was recovered and its contents poured into a jar for preservation until they could be analysed at the Bedford Institute.

The day was overcast, cloudy and chilly, the coastline appearing dark, lumpy and lowering, with the forlorn screeches from circling gulls a somehow suitable accompaniment to the view. We ran on a course from Trout Bay, north of Corner Brook, to the light at Iles-Ste-Marie, which we never did see because of torrential evening rain squalls that shut out the land.

It was weather like this that had forced Louis Jolliet's ship to run for shelter at Iles-Ste-Marie late in June 1694, during his second voyage to Labrador. Rain and fog hampered his progress east along that particular stretch of the North Shore where the lurking, unmarked reefs made him stand his ship well off from the land.

In much the same predicament as Bayfield, unable to take a compass bearing of anything ashore, with even the radar picture hopelessly blurred and the land grey-smudged by the heavy rain, we cancelled the last in the series of the day's pollution tows. A course was then set to head easterly along the coast towards the jumble of islands, their close-blending outlines a dark slate-blue against the rain-freshened evening sky that was now new-washed and clear as if swept by some unseen giant windshield wiper.

Gradually, the seeming solid, grey-gamboge mass, clear-etched against the saffron sky, broke into its component islands: Schooner Island, Entry Island, Ile du Jardin. The narrow passage, about half a cable wide, leading between Entry and Schooner Islands, gave into the sheltered but bleak basin of Harrington Harbour, unlit except for a scatter of unwinking, pale yellow windows in the houses clustered on the west side and marking the little village of Harrington Harbour itself.

The small, solid wooden jetty, deserted and without lights, lay half-hidden in the black, late-evening shadows of Hospital Island on which the settlement was built. The dominant feature of that island is naturally the old Grenfell Mission Hospital, now run by the Quebec Provincial Government, although still staffed mainly by Grenfell people. The

'mission' nature of their work has been officially discontinued, just as the Moravian Mission gave up its activities at Killinek (Port Burwell) in 1924 at the request of the Quebec Government.

The Grenfell Hospital at Harrington Harbour, where a doctor had first been stationed in 1905, was built in 1906 by Canadian supporters of the mission when a launch was donated for the work in the area. By the 1970s the hospital had come under the administration of the Province of Quebec, and it is no longer listed as one of the hospitals of the International Grenfell Association.

On our first visit to Harrington Harbour in 1971 we had eased alongside just before dusk and were busy securing the mooring lines when a gust of wind swung the stern of the *Porte St Louis* out from the jetty. The ship then stopped with an abruptness that had an odd, dead feeling to it. As I looked aft, the mainmast had an almost imperceptible tilt, and the deck seemed to my suddenly sensitive feet to have an equally slight slant; the ship was touching the bottom or else an underwater ledge.

After a few tense seconds of utter stillness, the stern swung slowly back towards the jetty, the life again quickened through the deck. In the small crowd that was gathering on the jetty a dour-looking old-timer took his pipe out of his mouth and called up to the bridge, 'Ferry wen' agroun' there las' week, skipper.' So much for local knowledge. For some unknown reason, the sounding of eight feet that we recorded on that spot in 1971 could not be located again in 1972 and 1973, when a depth of three-and-a-half fathoms showed at the same place.

Ashore to make sketches of the harbour and its approaches, I was told that the population, of Newfoundland origin, was made up of some forty-five families although there were only five surnames to be found there.

On our 1972 visit some of us were invited by the local priest, a cheerful little Sicilian — Heaven knows how he got there — to what was loosely called a coffee and cake party in the local church hall. The Newfoundland style of the settlement was soon obvious in the rousing square-dances that were carried on throughout the night, almost without a break, to the adrenalin-thundering, foot-stomping music of an energetic and inexhaustible accordionist named Neil, whom we saw climbing into his boat at six o'clock in the morning to go fishing after a whole night of partying. The coffee had very early given way to more stimulating refreshment.

At the party were a few young Americans, students who had come to work among the children of Harrington Harbour for the summer, at the end of which they returned to universities in the United States. One of them was being continually pointed out to me with some awe by his compatriots as being a Rockefeller, or at least related to that clan. Although we did not see such students on our other annual visits, it seems that these groups went to Harrington Harbour every summer, the program being sponsored by an American doctor who had at one time worked with the Grenfell Mission at Harrington.

Harrington Harbour, Quebec.

I must say that I wondered just how much influence these people could possibly have on such a closely knit community, where a proud spirit was very evident. The houses were strong, neat, well-maintained and fresh-painted in stolid defiance of the bare, wind-coarsened hills, over which rough wooden planks provided a sort of gangway, straddling the soggy-mossed slopes. New construction and repairs were being carried out at the jetty, although the previous year's push to build a road to Chevery on the mainland where an airstrip was planned, appeared to be at a standstill.

From the top of the hill above the Grenfell Hospital's helicopter landing pad was an impressive view of the harbour and the rocky islets scattering out into the Gulf, discouraging any too-close familiarity. As I sketched the scene, a small craft of the Department of Fisheries nosed into the harbour, its bridge-house badged with the fleur-de-lis and the legend, 'Pêcheries'. French, however, is hardly spoken in the settlement; Harrington Harbour was settled by people from Bay Roberts and Harbour Grace in Newfoundland.

After taking soundings in the harbour for the 1973 Report of Proceedings, the ships sailed from Harrington on 24 July to carry out more surface pollution tows in the Strait of Belle Isle. The course would take us down to Blanc Sablon, so named by Cartier when he put in at that place. ◆

SANIKILUAQ

By Richard Harrington

The main street in Sanikiluaq. The community is located on Flaherty Island, one of the Belcher group. The building on the right is the school.

SANIKILUAQ (population 329) is the only settlement on the dozen islands of the Belchers, those almost barren ribs of rock lying off the coast of Quebec in Hudson Bay. Despite their location only 80 miles (120 km) offshore, these islands come under the administration of the Northwest Territories, as do the other offshore islands in Hudson and James Bays.

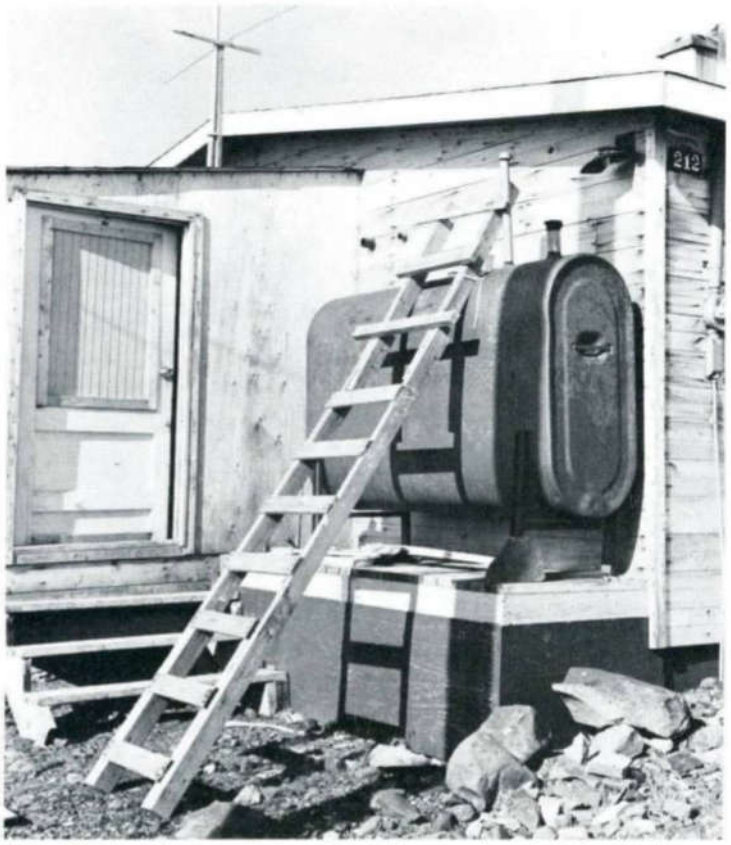
The Belchers were always considered a hard-luck posting by the Hudson's Bay Company personnel. They were difficult to reach much of the year, and the Inuit had no animals to trap, no moose or caribou to provide meat. Their diet was almost wholly seal, which are still hunted occasionally to eke out store-bought food.

I nearly visited the archipelago in 1948, when I travelled south from Port Harrison (now Inukjuak) with an Inuit guide and dog-team. All I knew of the islands' past was that they were probably named for Captain James Belcher who was employed by the Hudson's Bay Company as early as 1706, and made nine trips from England to Company posts on the shores of Hudson and James Bays between 1714 and 1724. (Middleton's map of 1743 was the earliest to apply the name 'Belcher' to the islands.) I also knew that in 1915-16 the early movie-maker Robert Flaherty took some photos and film footage there — a forerunner for his famous *Nanook of the North.*

When we reached the HBC post at Great Whale River (now Poste-de-la-Baleine) I was told that Flaherty had had a pianola transported to the Belchers, and I wondered what had become of it. Subsequently I learned that Flaherty had given it to his friend Wetalltok. When Wetalltok discovered that the pianola was too big to fit into his snow-house, he loaded it on his kamotik and took it 85 miles across the sea ice to Mavor, the HBC manager at Great Whale River. Mavor, he knew, considered the pianola the 'most precious thing on earth' and would buy it for a good price. By the time Wetalltok reached Great Whale, Mavor had been transferred to Fort George, 180 miles south. Wetalltok followed and arrived many nights later.

'The thing worked, you'll be surprised to hear' Mavor reported to Flaherty. Though some of its

Photographer and author Richard Harrington has travelled the Arctic regions of the world for over three decades. His most recent book is 'The Inuit: Life As it Was'.



The modern Inuit home is government-built, has a number, electricity with the meter outside and an outdoor fuel tank. The ladder is kept handy for fire prevention and control.

notes were what Wetalltok called 'sick sounds'.

The side trip to the Belchers in 1948 would have taken from two to four days over rough ice. What really killed the notion was meeting Peter Sala who informed my guide that the ice was not solidly frozen yet, that there were still open leads. This news alarmed my guide who was already nervous in unfamiliar territory.

Peter Sala, the islands' most notorious character, was living in exile from his home, at Great Whale River. In 1941 he and a few friends in a religious frenzy had murdered several Inuit who could not believe that Sala was actually Jesus Christ returned to earth. The HBC manager sent a message to the head office in Winnipeg. 'Three murders have been committed on Belcher Islands. Advise immediate police investigation.' Sala and the others were tried and served sentences, and Sala was banished from the Belchers. In October 1981, I learned that Peter Sala, now 75, is still living at Great Whale River. He had recently visited Sanikiluaq to see his son Markosee's eight children, but the islanders did not encourage him to stay. The old dread lingers.

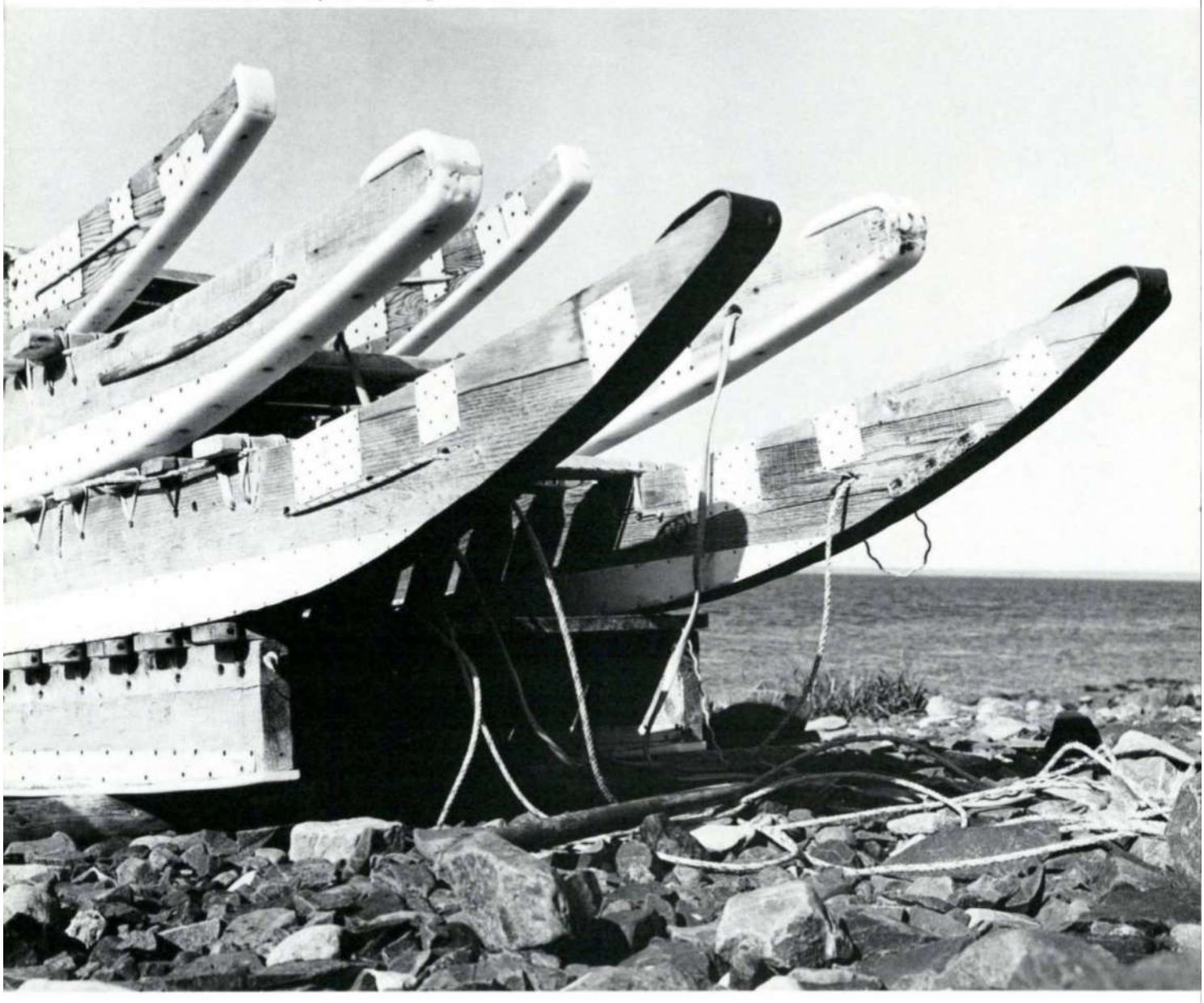
The Belchers are now easy to reach, no longer dependent upon ice conditions. Nowadays, an Austin Airways Twin Otter calls almost every day on its flights north and south along the east coast of Hudson Bay.

A tall pleasant young man, Ron Dewar formerly of Montreal, met my plane with a pick-up truck, and whisked me off to the Amaulik Motel, a part of the Inuit Mitiq Co-operative Association of which Dewar was manager. The Amaulik can accommodate 16 in four rooms, and has a dining room, but no bar. The islanders voted to remain 'Dry'. As on past northern trips, I carried my sleeping bag, prepared to sleep on floors if necessary, but I didn't need it.

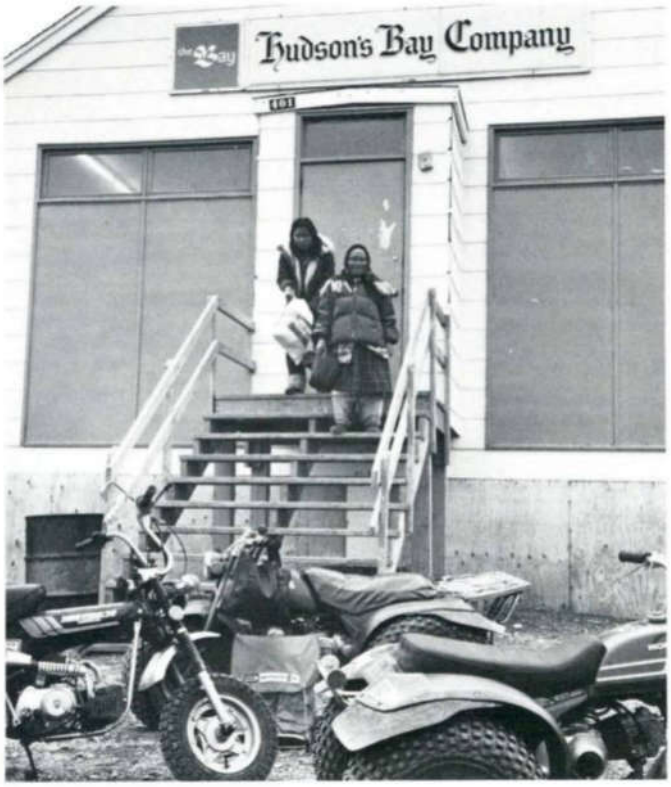
This was only the first of many adjustments I had to make to today's way of life in the Arctic.

Sanikiluaq, with a population of about 320 Inuit and nine whites, supports two department stores — the HBC self-serve and that of Mitiq, the Inuit co-operative. Outside the former I noticed customers loading up their 'All-Terrain Cycles' with groceries in plastic shopping bags. The driver, often a woman,

Traditionally, the Inuit used mud and a coating of ice to glaze the runners of their kamotiks. Today the Inuit sled travels on plastic sheathing.



Almost daily, an Austin Airways Twin Otter plane calls at Sanikiluaq's airport.



Three-wheeled motorcycles parked outside the Sanikiluaq store. Shoppers use the 'All-terrain' cycles, valued at $2,500 each, to take their purchases home — a distance of 200-300 metres down the street.

would roar up the gravel road 200-300 metres to home. These cycles with three big soft tires can traverse muskeg, mud or rock, and cost around $2,500 each. On Sundays, all the vehicles are parked around the igloo-shaped Anglican church.

The village boasts some sixty wooden houses, prefabricated in the South; the land is being bulldozed for more housing. The community, though built on rock and stones, is exceptionally clean, and walking along the roads day or night, I was constantly greeted by smiling faces. Nights in summer are not dark at 56° north latitude.

Fresh water is taken from a nearby lake and delivered by tank truck to indoor tanks in each house. Pipelines would freeze, and in addition are very costly to install. Waste is collected regularly in plastic bags, and taken to the dump.

Several nights a week, bingo is played over the local radio station. Winners dash to their pink or blue dial telephones and shout 'Bingo!'

Two earth-satellite stations service islanders exclusively. One is for communication with the world outside the Belchers (Sanikiluaq's area code is 819); the other is for radio and television reception. Radio, including FM, comes from Frobisher Bay. Via satellite, viewers receive superb television images. A large generator, diesel-fed from large tanks, brings electricity, including street lights, to the whole community.

A bright young woman, who might well represent the Inuit woman of today, is Rhoda Innuksuk, born in Igloolik. She is co-author of the book *We Don't Live in Snow Houses Now*, and teaches courses on a variety of subjects to adults, in the bright modern school on the hill. Her courses, as well as the everyday classes, are taught in English.

Sanikiluaq offers few jobs. Some Inuit are employed in the utility fields, and operate efficiently, but many receive cheques from government for one reason or another. Officials visit the Belchers in surprisingly large numbers, in view of the size of the population. They arrive by chartered plane generally, to inspect, service, examine, propose, advise or arrange everything they consider necessary.

During a courtesy call to the HBC store, manager T. W. MacLaren showed me a fine lot of local soapstone carvings, the only source of cash income on the islands. The carvers have their own quarry and the demand for their work remains high. Both stores in the settlement ship quantities of carvings south by air.

Few of the islanders travel much, even though travel is easier than before. Mostly it is pregnant women who do the journeying south to Moosonee, Ontario, to have their babies in hospital. But the people I spoke with had no desire to migrate south to cities. They are quite content with life on the Belchers, as lived today. ◆

Teacher Rhoda Innuksuk represents the Inuit woman of today. Born in Igloolik, she conducts adult education classes in Sanikiluaq and worked with Susan Cowan as translator on the book 'We Don't Live in Snow Houses Now'.

Two earth-satellite stations provide telephone service, radio programs from Frobisher Bay, and excellent television reception. The stations are serviced by specialized technicians at least twice a year.

RAYTHEON

Birsay Village on the Assiniboine

By Barry Kaye

CONCERNED that its sketchy knowledge of Rupert's Land was hindering policy deliberations, the London Committee of the Hudson's Bay Company, in 1814, determined to solicit detailed geographical information from its officers in the field. It thus required that 'every chief, & Master of a Trading District be desired as soon as practicable, to make a Report addressed to the Governor of the Department in which he is situated, as to the present state of the district under his command'. Among the many district reports subsequently sent to London was a 'General Report of Red River District by Peter Fidler 1819 May'. Fidler had cartographic skills and, as the London Committee requested, he included a sketch map to depict the fur-trade district for which he was responsible. On his 'A Map of Red River District 1819' which formed the frontispiece to his report, Fidler marked, apart from the trading posts, only one settlement along the Assiniboine River Valley. This was 'Birsay Village', which Fidler placed on the north side of the river midway between Lyons Island and Kettle Plain.

Much has been written about the beginnings of agricultural settlement in the Red River country, yet there is only one published reference to the village of Birsay that appeared on Fidler's manuscript map of 1819. Unlike the planned agricultural colony that Lord Selkirk, with the support of the Company, was building at the mouth of the Assiniboine at this time, Birsay was the creation of a group of freemen who had lived in the Brandon House area. The freemen element in the population of Rupert's Land comprised former employees of the fur-trade companies who had chosen not to return to Britain or to Canada at the termination of their period of service. They were called freemen to distinguish them from the engagés, the fur-trade servants whose contracts had not come to an end. By the early 1800s many of the freemen had lived long enough in the Northwest 'free' of the companies to be regarded as permanent inhabitants of the region. Although they were found in most parts of Rupert's Land, the freemen appear to have been most numerous in the transitional parkland zone of Western Canada where provisions were most abundant and varied. The Red River Valley, with significant concentrations at the Forks and Pembina, was one of their favourite haunts.

The vast majority of the freemen were free Canadians. In other words, they were the discharged French-Canadian employees of the several Montreal-based fur companies that had expanded their trading activities west of Lake Superior since about 1770. Hudson's Bay Company freemen were far fewer, for until the founding of the Red River Settlement in 1812 the Company's general policy was that its servants should leave the country and return to Europe when their contracts expired. By the second decade of the nineteenth century, however, there was a small British freemen component in the population of the Northwest. From Lord Selkirk we know that a small number of former Company servants 'had . . . established themselves in the vicinity of Brandon House living with the Crees nearly in the same manner as the free Canadians of R.R. [Red River] did with the Sautaux'. Not surprisingly, most of the Hudson's Bay freemen were natives of the Orkney Islands, the island group north of the Scottish mainland that supplied the Company with about 75 per cent of its servants by 1800.

The freemen of the Brandon House area referred to by Selkirk were the same ones mentioned several times by Peter Fidler in the Brandon House post journals for 1817 and 1818. Fidler's journal entries suggest that most of the freemen living in the environs of Brandon House were servants who had been dismissed from service for various misdemeanours and acts of insubordination, rather than servants whose contracts had expired. John Lyons was set free in August 1816 for refusing to accompany James Inkster on a trip to the Indian Elbow on the upper Assiniboine. Humphrey Favel was set free on account of his bad behaviour to John McLeod at Red River in

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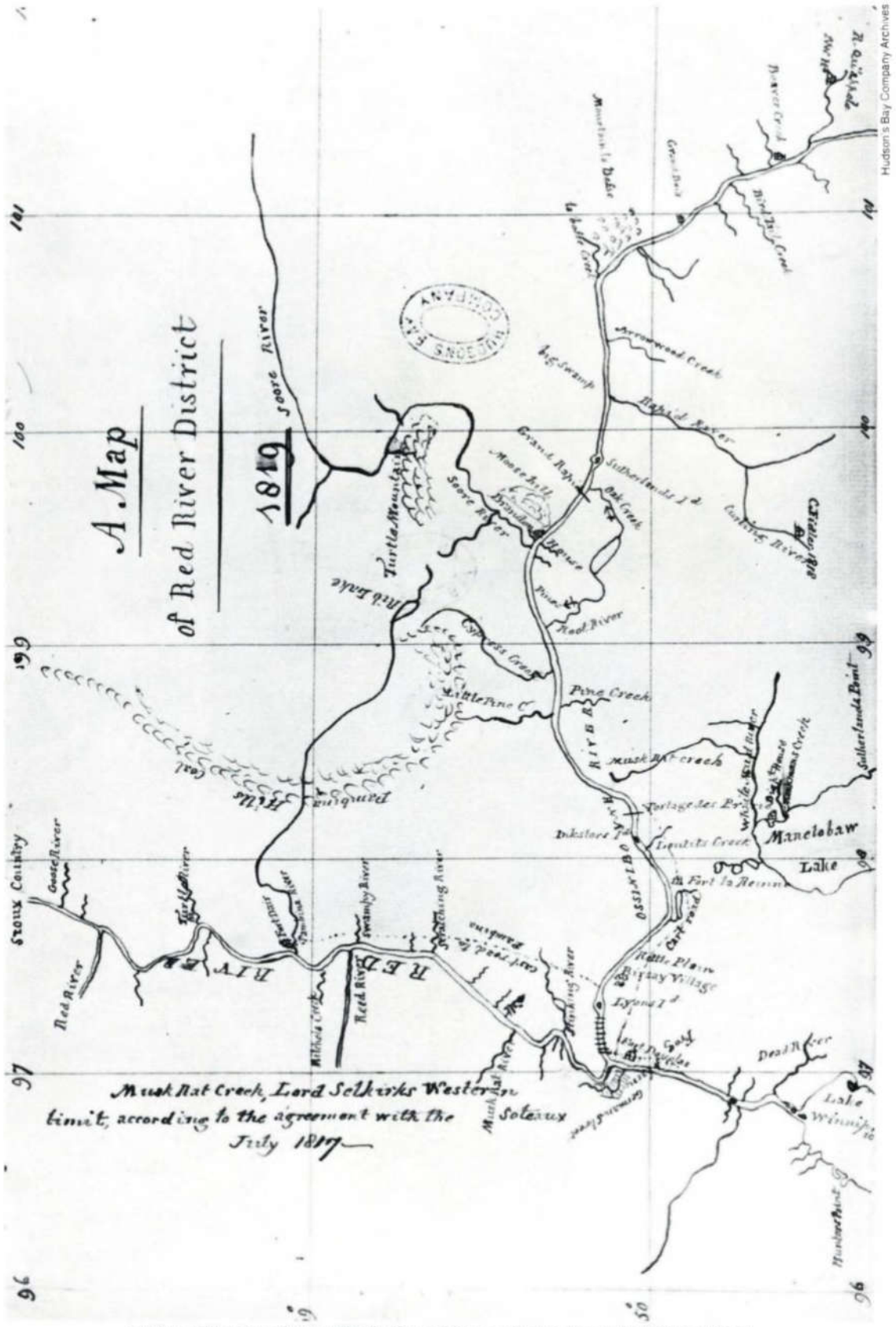
Barry Kaye is an assistant professor of geography at the University of Manitoba.

The author gratefully acknowledges the permission of the Hudson's Bay Company to quote from documents in its archives.



'A Map of Red River District 1819' by Peter Fidler, on which he has marked 'Birsay Village' on the north side of the Assiniboine River.

1815. Tom Favel was released from the Company's service because of his refusal to go with Fidler to Jack River at the northern end of Lake Winnipeg. Magnus Spence, in the service of the Company since 1783, became free in 1815. He appears to have been the leader of the group.

After their release from service, these Hudson's Bay freemen seem to have at first led a semi-nomadic existence, residing in tents out on the plains, yet continuing to hunt and do odd jobs for the Brandon House traders. For reasons that are not known, the freemen decided during the winter of 1817-1818 to adopt a more sedentary way of life. They planned to achieve this by establishing a small colony for themselves and their families somewhere in the Assiniboine River Valley.

The freemen originally intended to settle at Portage la Prairie, an old fur-trading locale some sixty miles up the Assiniboine from the Forks. But further consideration caused them to decide against that location. The Portage was finally judged to be too remote from Selkirk's Red River Colony. The freemen believed that the Indians of the area 'would be more troublesome to them at that distance' from Red River. Instead, one of their number, Magnus Spence's son Jack, was sent to explore the lower Assiniboine down to the Forks in search of a more suitable place to locate the settlement. After Spence returned to Brandon House on 1 March 1818, the decision was made to settle on the north side of the Assiniboine some three miles above the White Horse Plain, or twenty-two miles above the Forks. According to Fidler, the freemen chose not to throw in their lot with Selkirk's colony on the Red so as to be nearer 'the Buffalo grounds in Winter when the fish are scarser'.

Fidler's map of the Red River country located Birsay south of the recently developed cart road that followed the north bank of the Assiniboine, linking the Forks to Portage la Prairie and Brandon House. Another advantage of Birsay's location revealed by Fidler's map was its proximity to the Passage, the shallow place in the Assiniboine below the White Horse Plain where hunting parties and fur traders forded the river to join the cart road that ran south to Pembina, the settlement on the Red which by the early 1800s was probably the most important buffalo-hunting base on the northern plains.

Yet the location chosen by the freemen was still near enough to the Forks to allow them to buy their supplies from the colony stores at Fort Douglas. Fidler commented in his journal on 17 September 1818 that several of the Company's former servants settled on the Assiniboine had called at the colony to pick up supplies.

The Brandon House freemen set out for the White Horse Plain on 7 March and the clearing of land and erection of buildings seems to have commenced soon afterwards. When Fidler passed by the settlement for the first time on 7 June the freemen were busy hauling timber and erecting five houses for as many families. Once their houses were finished, they intended to enclose the settlement within a picket fence to keep out horse thieves 'as the Bungees [Saulteaux] are much addicted to Horse stealing in the Summer Time'. Fidler's experienced opinion was that the freemen had selected 'a very good situation' for the settlement. It was called Birsay after the parish of the same name in the Orkneys. Birsay was the home parish of Magnus Spence, the oldest settler in the group.

In a letter dated 30 August 1818, Captain F. Matthey, one of the de Meuron settlers, informed Lord Selkirk of the new Orkneyman element in the population of the colony. As Matthey wrote: 'We had the other day an arrival of more settlers, Orkney-men, their wives brown and white and their children — they have chosen their lots on the Assiniboine River some leagues up at the Plain du Cheval Blanc — they have laid the foundations of Orkney Town there. There are some more expected . . . '.

Early in September Miles Macdonell, the first Governor of the Red River Colony, surveyed farm lots for these new Orkneymen settlers. He divided up the north bank of the Assiniboine at Birsay into fourteen lots of one hundred acres each. As at the settlements on the Red, the river frontage of each holding was ten chains. River lots had been surveyed along the Red below the Forks for the first time in 1813, but those at Birsay were probably the earliest to be laid out along the Assiniboine.

The population of Birsay was small. Fidler's count in the spring of 1819 indicated that the settlement included eight males, two females and thirteen children (six boys and seven girls) for a total of twenty-three persons. Of the eight male settlers named by Fidler only two, Magnus Spence and James Monkman, had a wife and family listed against their names. This makes one suspect that Fidler underestimated the numbers of women and children at Birsay. Whatever the actual number of females at the freeman settlement, they were almost certainly all Indian or mixed-blood women. Matthey's description of the wives of the Orkneymen as 'brown and white' strongly implies this, as does the entry in Fidler's journal for 30 October 1818 that '3 Indians passed here [Brandon House] for the Saskatchewan river who are relations of some of the Cos. servants who have recently settled at Birsay some 22 miles above the Forks on the Assiniboyne'.

In the first year at Birsay the settlers planted only four bushels of wheat, half as much barley and some potatoes. These figures imply that the Birsay people continued to depend heavily on buffalo hunting and fishing for much of their food. Certainly the freemen

Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto

'Buffalo hunters Camp. White Horse Plains', from a sketch by William Armstrong, undated.

had chosen a location for their settlement which gave them easy access to the plains hunt and the river fishery. When Fidler called at Birsay on his way back to Brandon House in March 1819 he observed: 'The freemen there had all come in from the Buffalo, having laid up a good stock & some of them are moving to the spots they intend to build at'.

The settlement at Birsay lasted for no more than seventeen months. After the apparently total destruction of their crops by grasshoppers, the freemen abandoned the settlement in August 1819 and moved south to hunt buffalo in the Pembina Hills region. Fidler wrote on 14 August that 'James Sandison & some others pitched here from Birsay and all now left that place'.

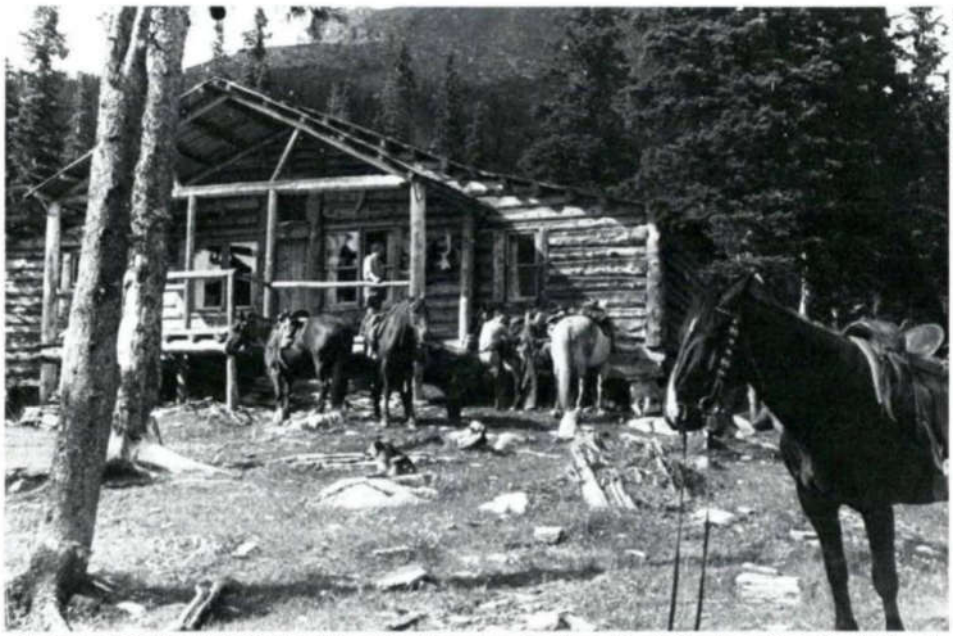
The problems that beset the Birsay freemen during the summer of 1819 and caused them to abandon their 'village' were not restricted to grasshopper swarms and loss of crops. The settlement was also hit by disease (whooping cough and measles), which struck mainly at the children. James Sandison lost two children on 4 August. Oman Norquay lost one child at about the same time and Oman Norquay himself, one of the elders of the settlement, died shortly afterwards. Nobody was residing at Birsay when Fidler passed in mid-September, 1819. His final comment on the settlement whose progress he had recorded was as follows: '. . . put up at Birsay at 6½ p.m. — now entirely deserted owing to the crop being destroyed by the Grasshoppers & several dying of the Chincough and Measles'.

It would seem that most of the Birsay freemen were eventually absorbed into the main colony on the Red River. The names of several former residents of Birsay, including Magnus Spence, James Spence and James Sandison, appear in the Red River census for 1827. At Red River they settled alongside other ex-employees of the Hudson's Bay Company, many of them Orkneymen, who joined the colony in growing numbers after the reorganization of the fur trade that followed the union of the Hudson's Bay and North West Companies in 1821. And the area of the White Horse Plain vacated by the Orkney freemen did not remain unsettled for long. In 1824 the large numbers of Métis and Canadian freemen at Pembina were persuaded to leave that borderland settlement, and migrate north to the Red River Colony. Some of the Pembina refugees chose to settle at St Boniface but most moved up the Assiniboine to the White Horse Plain and founded Grantown, later the parish of St François-Xavier. At that location they established the first permanent settlement west of Red River, succeeding where the beleaguered Birsay freemen had failed five years earlier. ◆

BERG LAKE CHALET

By Dolly Connelly

Photographer and author Dolly Connelly of Port Townsend, Washington, has explored many remote and scenic places during several decades of world travel. Photographs are by the author, unless otherwise noted.

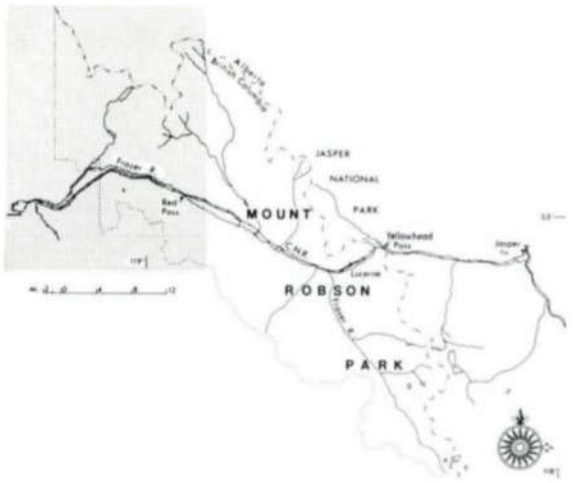


Collection of Alice Wright

The scene at the Berg Lake Chalet, 1969, as the Hargreaves daughters, Margie (barely visible in the shadow of her horse) and Ishbel saddle up their horses. Mrs Hargreaves (Sophia) watches from the porch, and on the right is a friend, Norma Houston.

A FAVOURITE DISCUSSION among nature lovers is the choice of the world's most beautiful lake. Candidates vary all the way from Oregon's Crater Lake to Lake Nahuel Huapi on the Argentine-Chilean border, from Africa's Lake Victoria to Siberia's Lake Baikal. Always someone will mention a small Canadian lake, insignificant in this company, measuring no more than one by two miles, fed by Robson and Tumbling Glaciers at the foot of the final precipitous upsweep of Mount Robson. Berg Lake in Mount Robson Provincial Park in British Columbia makes the list for its exalting beauty. In earlier days a good part of the reason for its selection was linked to the hospitality of a secluded horse ranch at the base of the Berg Lake Trail, and to the personality of a remarkable woman known to the international fraternity of mountain climbers as the 'Mother Confessor of Mount Robson'.

Completion of British Columbia's Yellowhead Pass route through the northern Canadian Rockies, connecting the Columbia Valley with Jasper, brought access to a vast swath of wilderness once near-inaccessible, and to one of the world's most spectacular mountains — the steep, banded rock mass of Mount Robson, at 12,972 feet the highest peak in the Canadian Rockies. But for well over half a century, dating back to the 1920s, climbers of many lands have known the isolated horse ranch in a narrow valley at the base of the great mountain. Mount Robson Ranch could be reached over the arduous Indian 'Leather Trail' from Jasper to the head of navigation on the Upper Fraser River. Better



still, Canadian National Railway's Super-Continental had established the guest ranch's own station on its Trans-Canada route, and observed the mainline stop on request.

By the early 1920s, climbers, hunters, scientists, map-makers, explorers and people who loved wilderness areas, came to depend on the ranch and three generations of its pioneer family for aid in projects ranging from summit ascents to fossil-collecting. Ranch hands helped to construct and maintain a 15-mile trail extending from their horse pastures up the wondrous Valley of a Thousand Falls, around some of Canada's most spectacular waterfalls to Berg Lake, 2,500 feet higher in altitude.

At Berg Lake, so called because it is dotted with icebergs calved from the snout of Mount Robson's noisy Tumbling Glacier, the ranch built a chalet and cabins as base camp for exploration of the Robson massif, an immense assembly of black rock and shining ice walls that seems to fill the entire sky. Out of this high valley at the headwaters of the rushing Robson River radiate routes up to the lesser summits, climbs of ten- and eleven-thousand-foot peaks: Lynx, Phillips, Mumm, Rearguard, Titkana, Resplendent, Whitehorn, and a mountain improbably named Anne-Alice.

In 1913 and 1922 the Canadian Alpine Club packed up *en masse* to explore this overwhelming landscape, stimulating interest that has not lagged to this day. The yellowed registers at Berg Lake Chalet were filled with detailed accounts of ascents of Canadian Alpine Club members and those of the American Alpine Club, Sierra Club, Portland's Mazamas, Seattle's Mountaineers, the Adirondack Club and Tacoma's Summit Alpine Club.

This activity was not lost upon the Canadian National Railway. The line recently had extended steel through Yellowhead Pass on the Leather Trail to Tête Jaune Cache, down the valley of the North Thompson River to Kamloops and west to the Pacific Ocean. The rails reached natural wonders totally unknown in the past, inspiring an era of adventure that reached full bloom in the 1920s. Convinced that the continent was filled with people who would like nothing better than to meet the glaciers face to face, the railroad launched plans to introduce the grandeur of the Canadian Rockies to vacationists. A cluster of four square log cabins was built on the ancient moraine of Robson Glacier. Visitors were greeted with full sight of the curling snout of the glacier against a dramatic backdrop of Lynx and Resplendent Mountains, with Mount Robson rising a sheer 7,600 feet out of deep Berg Lake a turn of the head away.

Popular for a few years, the Canadian National Railway cabins eventually were abandoned and long since have collapsed under the tremendous weight of

winter snows. The railroad's attention was diverted to Jasper — which could be reached by rail without surmounting a 15-mile mountain trail. Berg Lake was left to its wild creatures and to the people of Mount Robson Ranch. The ranch and its crew were in touch with everyone headed up the mountain, which was a kind of extension of the spreading horse pastures at the other end of the trail. The ranch and chalet served as safeguards to climbing parties.

Sometimes rescues have been spectacular, as with the race down the mountain by 16-year-old Cathie McKirdy on a July evening in 1968 to summon help for grievously injured David Brown of Los Alamos, New Mexico, caught above the 10,000-foot level on the Kain Route to Robson's summit by an avalanche.

Climb leader Dr George Bell descended to the chalet, and there wisely turned over the run down the mountain to young Cathie, one of the summer staff of students at Berg Lake Chalet. Cathie pulled on her boots, grabbed notes on the position of the injured climber, and ran down the rough trail to the Yellowhead road in exactly two hours and twenty minutes. The usual good time on foot is six hours. She borrowed a guest's car and headed for the nearest phone to summon help from Jasper Park Ranger Station and the closest Royal Canadian Mounted Police, at Valemount. Two tries at helicopter lift-off were aborted by the weather, but a third was successful. Brown was flown out and taken to hospital in Jasper where he recovered. Cathie loafed for a day, and then jogged back up to her job at the chalet, which was operated each summer by teenagers.

The rapport between climbers and Mount Robson Ranch was strengthened in 1936 when fisheries biologist Alice Wright, an American with strong Canadian ties, vacationed in the Canadian Rockies. Learning of the exquisite lake fed by Robson and Tumbling Glaciers descending the north face of Mount Robson, Alice caught a Canadian National Railway freight, found the trail up the mountain and permanently lost her cool over Robson, just emerging from a swirl of fierce summer storm. When the ranch-founding Hargreaves family suggested that she return to help move 100 head of horses the following spring from their winter pasture on the Smoky River, 'that tied it up thoroughly'.

Alice Wright returned again and again, photographing the tilted strata of Mount Robson from high vantage points in all weathers and conditions of climb, putting together still and motion picture records of routes, augmented by generous gifts of summit photographs taken by climbers.

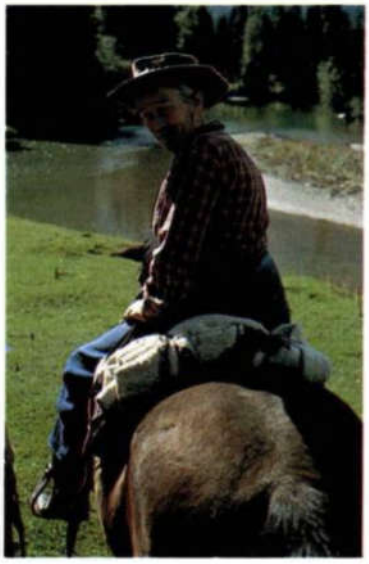
She gathered detailed reports of climbs, those aborted by weather and the successful ones, setting down minute points. The accounts are filled with emotion. 'It makes you feel humble and reverent', wrote one climber. In the yellowed registers at Berg Lake there was a multifarious company of the famous: England's gallant Lady Marie Evelyn Byng, wife of Lord Julian Byng, Canada's Governor-General from 1921 to 1926; Darryl Zanuck; Hal Roach, Sr; Sir Frederick Banting, co-discoverer of insulin; Richard and Lyn Harrington, photographer and journalist; Georgia Engelhard, indefatigable Canadian sportswoman who hired a Jasper guide for a vain one-woman attempt on the north face. Artists frequently found their way to the chalet, among them Canadian painter Lawren Harris, and a shy priest who painted Berg Lake and the mountain for his own pleasure.

Alice Wright became an expert on the mountain, her aid and photos sought out by almost every party headed up those massive, icy slabs. She climbed Mount Robson mentally many times each season, studying constant fresh snowfall that never settled but built to slides, sometimes leaving in their wake a glittering icing of verglas so treacherous that even lower slopes were unclimbable. The very weight of fresh snow brought the layers beneath whomping down with a continuous dull thunder. In late spring some avalanches were so overwhelming that hint of their cold breath roared in ice dust through tall trees around the ranch.

'When it rains down here, it is snowing on the mountain,' Alice explained. She could predict conditions almost at a glance. 'Not weather, though. Robson, like all great mountains, makes its own weather and it can change in minutes.' A veteran of climbs in the Pyrenees, Alice would have liked to climb Robson 'when I was young and strong and foolish enough'. She doubtless has left more boot-prints on more routes of the Robson area than any other woman. Mount Anne-Alice was named for her and her climbing partner Anne Chesser, perhaps the first women to reach its summit.

The inexperienced? The mountain turns them back, shucks them off like the snow. There have been just two fatalities in all the years since Dr A. P. Coleman began his determined summit attempts in 1907. Both men were climbing alone. Mount Waffl, neighbour summit to Robson, is named for one of them, Newman D. Waffl of Orange, New Jersey.

In 1913 Austrian alpinist Conrad Kain led Colonel W. W. Foster and A. H. McCarthy up the north-east face to conquer at last the highest peak in the Canadian Rockies. 'Bergheil!' he shouted from the highest point in 1913. The Kain climb came as a sad disappointment to Curly Phillips, guide and packer, and the Reverend George R. B. Kinney, who claimed first ascent in the summer of 1909. Craig Merrihue and David Bernays of New York State climbed Robson in 1953, and on their descent came across a crumbling tin can wedged in rocks, containing a Canadian flag wrapped around a glass medicine vial.



Alice Wright (top), and in the centre, the Berg Lake Chalet built by Roy Hargreaves in 1913. Above, Alice Wright with two of her hundred horses, in the Big Meadow, Mount Robson Ranch.

The location was a false summit a few hundred feet below Robson's true summit. Still legible in the vial was the account of the Phillips-Kinney climb up the glass-smooth west walls. Phillips and Kinney had found themselves enveloped in mist and blowing snow, but continued up despite decreasing visibility and finally reached a point beyond which they could find nothing but open space. They were convinced for years that they'd made the first ascent, disproved when Conrad Kain brought back a different description of the summit.

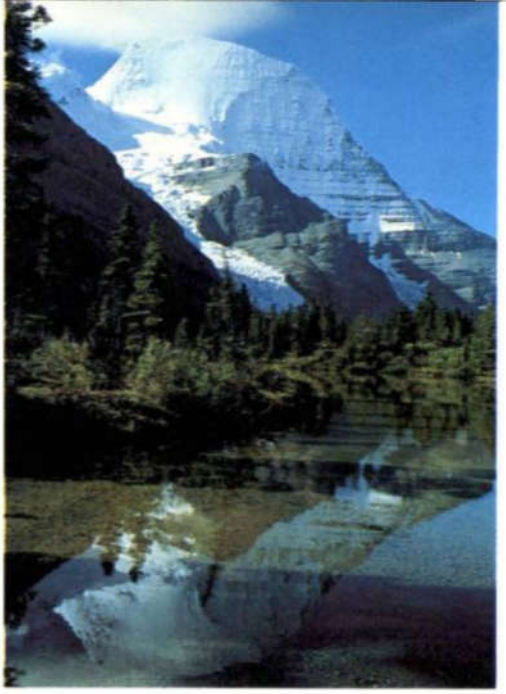
More than two decades ago, Alice Wright purchased the ranch and Berg Lake Chalet upon the retirement of its founder, Roy Hargreaves. Members of the Hargreaves family continued to work the large ranch with her. Management of the high chalet and guiding on the trails were the special forte of the self-reliant Hargreaves grandchildren who came down off the mountain at the last possible moment before their schooling had to be resumed in the fall.

In those years, Alice's greatest pleasure was to close the guest ranch office door and head up the Berg Lake Trail, guiding on routes she had known and loved for most of a lifetime. The coming of the Yellowhead Highway, which brought guests to a two-mile entrance road to the ranch, was not entirely a blessing.

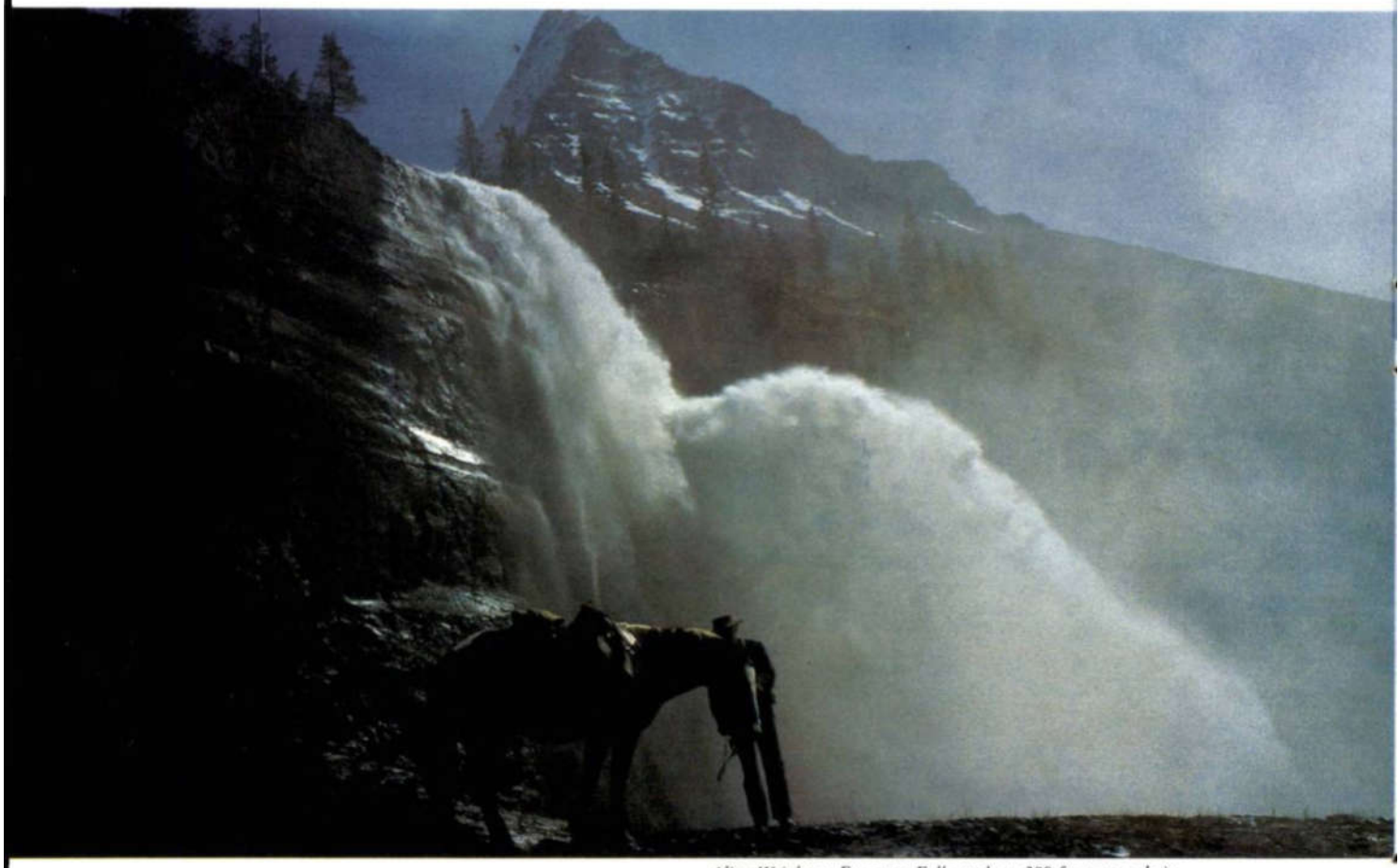
'Some people would start up from the car parking lot on the highway, especially by the Kinney Route,' Alice explained. 'We would never know they were on the mountain and they would not know we were here as back-up in an emergency.' Climbs of Mount Robson were infrequent enough — maybe a half dozen of a good summer — that park rangers established no regulations other than the requirement to register route. It was Alice who turned an educated eye on crampons, ice axes, ice screws, ropes and bivouac supplies. 'You can be pinned down for days and nights on end in bitter cold,' she warned. 'It's a two-day climb out of Berg Lake only if you're lucky.'

A first-night shelter was constructed of helicopter-dropped materials at the 9,000-foot level in the summer of 1966. Within a year it was lifted off into space by Robson's horrendous winds, which can reach 100 miles per hour. In recent years ski-touring clubs discovered Berg Lake in the spring months, and an increasing number of winter ascents were attempted. Mount Robson has been climbed as early as March. Rese Gibson and Joe Weiss, Alberta mountaineers, made the first successful winter ascent of 11,240-foot Mount Resplendent on a bitter February day in 1932. Mount Mumm was climbed on skis the first time in March of 1950.

In the early days when Alice Wright managed the chalet it was a wilderness shelter — no modern facilities — but good food and plenty of it. It was a time-honoured way of life centred on living things

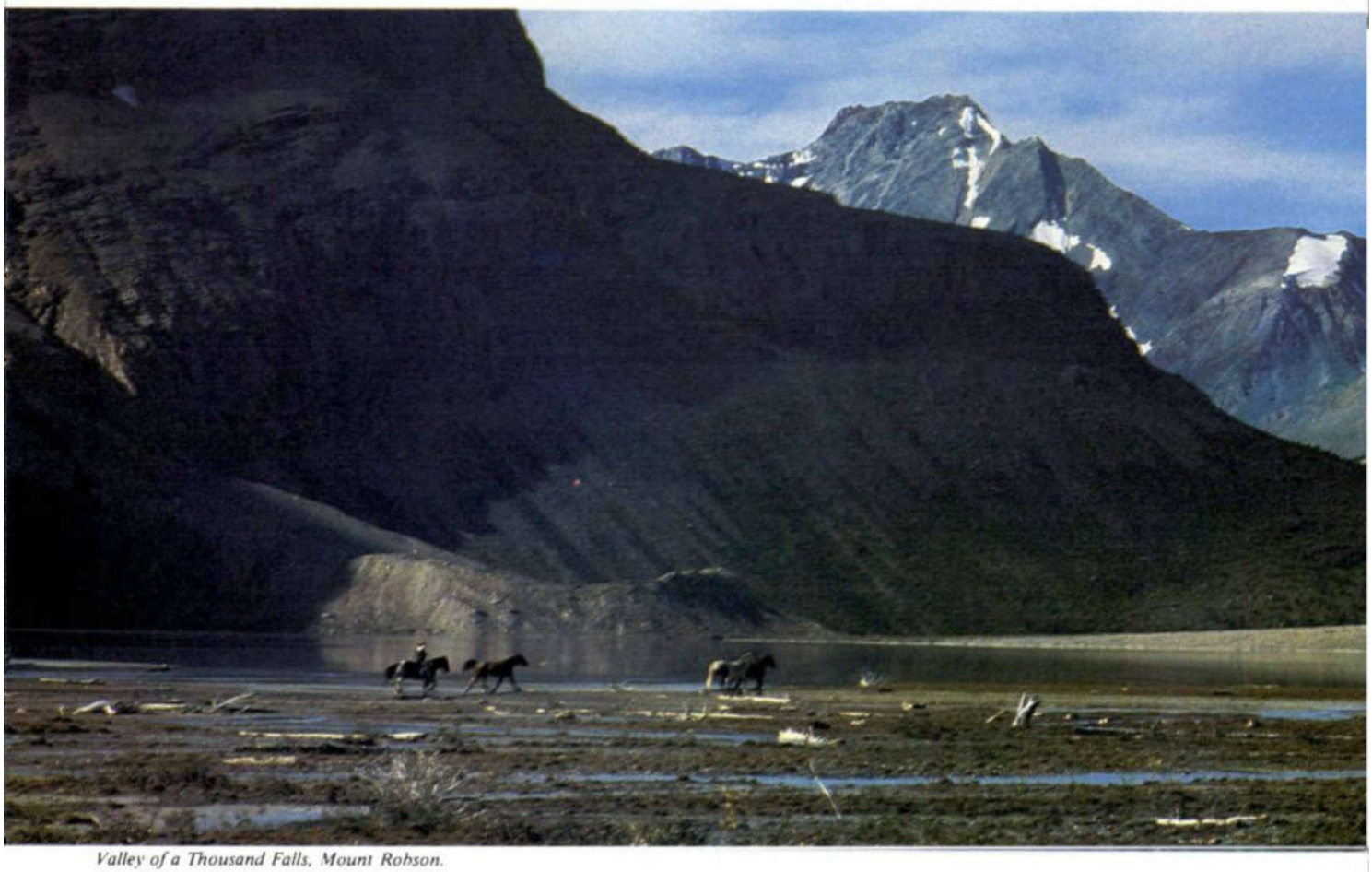


Mount Robson reflected in the quiet water of a small lake at the Canadian Alpine Club campgrounds.



Alice Wright at Emperor Falls, a sheer 200-foot cascade in the Robson River on the Berg Lake Trail.

Berg Lake, at the foot of Mount Berg, is fed by the Robson and Tumbling Glaciers.



Valley of a Thousand Falls, Mount Robson.

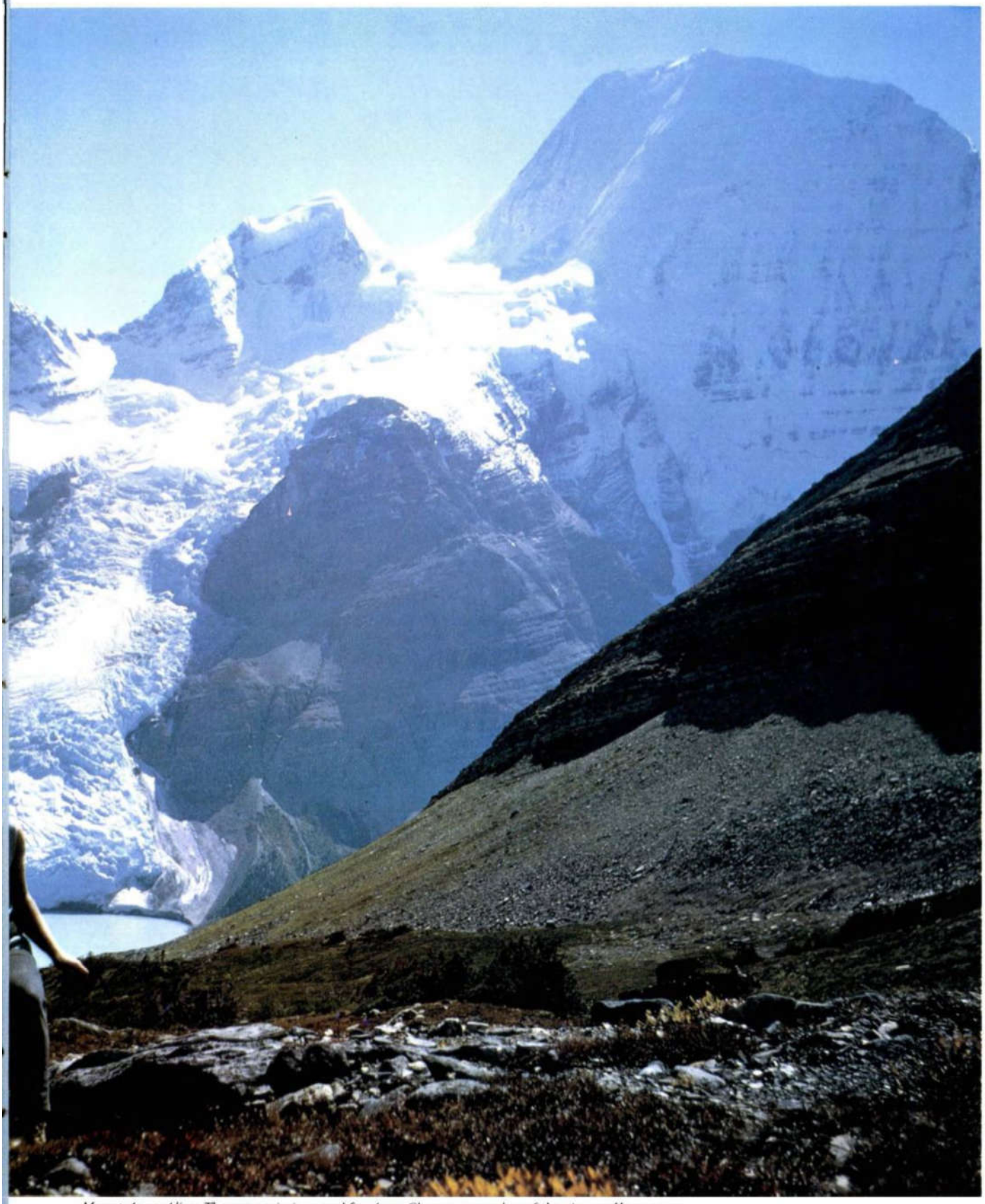
rather than machines, on people and horses and wild animals and fish in the rivers, with no television, no electricity, no phones. Now and again Alice got a letter from a prospective guest requesting printed menus in advance. She replied 'We eat what keeps the ranch hands healthy.'

Berg Lake was a great spot for esoterics. 'This is the most civilized place I've ever seen,' remarked the wife of a scientist to me in 1969, looking around the kerosene-lamp-lighted chalet and its boot-worn plank floor. Gathered around its blackened fire drum were an amateur glaciologist, plotting the considerable recession of Robson Glacier; a cartographer who had mapped the area from the air and wanted to check his findings at boot level; an entomologist collecting bumblebees on high alpine meadows; a college kid from Pomona on a health kick who set up his own camp near by and set about breathing deeply to clear the California smog out of his lungs; a young couple with three somewhat trail-worn children; hiking couples, picture-takers, a geologist who spent his days chipping shale cliffs of the Hitka-Mumm Col for fossils of Paleozoic trilobites and his evenings patiently identifying pocketfuls of rocks we all brought back to him; and a bearded young man bent on testing his ability to remain absolutely alone for varying periods of time. Topping it off were two Japanese alpinists practising in the icefall of Robson Glacier for climbs in the Himalayas.

In the fall ranch hands would go up to the chalet to prop walls and roof against great depths of snow which bury the building above its windows. Now and again in winter, they would go in on snowshoes to shovel snow from the roofs and check security. One winter a grizzly bashed a way in and fed luxuriously on frozen imported Danish hams. He compounded his felony by walking right through bedroom walls, reducing the main building to a shambles of broken dishes, ruined foods, broken windows, smashed furnishings and scattered wood stoves.

Winter down on the ranch, which turns off for all but special groups and big game hunters on 30 September, was right out of pioneer tales. Children of the scant railroading, ranger and ranching families once went to school by correspondence course, or a teacher was brought in to winter at one of the ranches. A paved road finally brought a school bus which drove them 60 miles round-trip to Valemont's modern schools. Snow to the first rail of the pasture fences was usual; to the second rail and the bellies of the horses was considered deep.

Says Alice, 'Everybody should have a taste of real country living so he can learn how things work. Our water lines were buried several feet deep, bringing a stream down out of the mountains, but in a real winter when it holds week after week at 30 below, dropping snow now and again to 50 below, every-



Mount Anne-Alice. The mountain is named for Anne Chesser, a member of the pioneer Hargreaves family, and Alice Wright who bought the Chalet in 1958 and managed it for 17 years.

thing froze. We hauled water barrels down to Bear Creek, where the Fraser River stays open. I met trains, wrapped in blankets. Sometimes they were two days late, and nobody could reach the ranch for Christmas dinner. This country always was for the strong.' In a winter wonderland of sparkling ice-covered trees, ranch people often looked up to see the mountain coated with deep new snow like a fat white marshmallow against winter's hushed, dark-blue sky, its tilted planes completely hidden. It doesn't last long — the weight of snow on those walls brings it down.

Yellowhead Pass was an Indian route long before white men came to the Northern Rockies. It is known both as the Leather Trail and Yellowhead Pass — Tête Jaune for a yellow-headed, Iroquois hunter named Pierre Hatsinaton who took a band of Iroquois fur hunters through the Mount Robson area in 1820 for Colin Robertson of the Hudson's Bay Company. Mount Robson is believed to be a derivation of Colin Robertson's name; the Indian name for the mountain is *Yuh-hai-has-hun*, Mountain of the Bands.

In 1958 when Alice Wright bought the Mount Robson Ranch, much had already changed. A dirt road brought in more guests and more outside contacts; the Park Service had built a campground to serve the public travelling on the road, and was in the process of building a second. The Dennison and Britton ranches some 15 and 25 miles away had become a coffee shop and gas station.

'The first sign the old way of life at the Ranch was threatened came when we learned that our horses were the objects of bitter animosity on the part of a few hikers,' Alice recalls, 'and that some people in the Park Service shared their antagonism.

'I had been a back packer in my youth in Quebec so when I went to the winter range with the Hargreaves, with horses to carry our gear, I thought this a mighty soft form of camping. Since I had always hiked and ridden it never occurred to me there need be anything incompatible about the two activities.

'Some of the newcomers were "dedicated" hikers, who made a religion of hiking, so that, in their opinion, anyone not hiking was an infidel. They wanted the park trails for themselves alone, as we learned when one of them asked a ranch employee who was guiding some guests to Berg Lake, "What are you doing with those horses on our trail?" Since the Berg Lake Trail was originally built for horses by Curly Phillips to pack in the Alpine Club of Canada in 1913, and the work of its upkeep had fallen to the ranch for many years, our employee was nothing short of flabbergasted.

'Now hiking has become fashionable and horses unfashionable. The hikers have the trails of Mount Robson Provincial Park almost to themselves. The Park uses helicopters instead of horses to carry their heavy objects and food supplies to Berg Lake. But fashion is a fickle lady, and there is this matter of an energy shortage. Perhaps one day horses, which run on renewable energy, will once again regularly travel the Berg Lake Trail.'

For seventeen years Alice Wright provided food and shelter and, for those who could not hike the trail or preferred to ride, transportation on horseback too. Each outfit that went up to the ranch carried supplies on pack horses as well as guests' duffle.

'Some guests came back repeatedly and we became firm friends,' says Alice. 'Of these, I shall mention only one — a lovely young lady who was paralyzed from the waist down, but was still able to ride. The loss of horses will close the trails to her and others who are not physically able to hike.'

Since the Berg Lake Chalet is in Mount Robson Provincial Park, the ranch could hold its site only on lease. The end of Alice Wright's tenure came when the park made it a condition of renewing the lease that the horses be corralled while they were in the park.

'Only one place in the Berg Lake area would do to hold, for a period of days, the number of horses we often required there' explained Alice. 'This place was too far from the Chalet for us to have protected them from molestation by horse haters. So I reluctantly had to decline to renew the lease.' As things stand today there are no regular trips to Berg Lake. The hikers carry their own tents, sleeping bags and supplies. The rich hire their own outfits.

'As for our beloved chalet' says Alice Wright, 'the Park Service left it to the porcupines for four years except for a few occasions when naturalists' talks were scheduled for stormy evenings. Officials plan to turn it into a shelter, which will be welcome at Berg Lake, where the weather can be fierce and unrelenting for days at a time. There is to be a circular fire pit in front of the building, where we sometimes made a bonfire.'

It is now expected that the Berg Lake shelter will be open to the public in the summer of 1982.

Change has come but nothing will erase the mark of the pioneers from this wild and wonderful country west of Jasper: . . . Coleman Glacier, named for Dr A. P. Coleman of the University of Toronto, who made first attempts to find a way up Mount Robson in 1907; Adolphus Lake, named for Coleman's Indian guide; Kinney Lake, for Reverend George R. B. Kinney; Mount Phillips for Curly Phillips; and Hargreaves Glacier for Roy Hargreaves who built the Berg Lake Chalet. And Anne-Alice, a long, slanting, banded block of mountain tilting up just short of ten thousand feet to form a vantage point among the congress of the giants, named for the woman who worried climbers up and down her mountains for nearly two decades. ◆

High North

THE PAINTINGS OF RON BOLT

IN AUGUST OF 1978, Ron Bolt and fellow artist Geoffrey Armstrong travelled the Arctic. Leaving from Edmonton, they visited Inuvik, Tuktoyaktuk, Holman Island, Coppermine, Yellowknife, Baker Lake, Frobisher Bay, Pangnirtung and Auyuittuq National Park. Both have had showings of their arctic pieces, and the paintings presented on the next four pages and on the cover of this issue were exhibited in a recent one-man show of Bolt's work at the Roberts Gallery in Toronto.

For the past several years Ron Bolt's main subject matter has been the sea and the coastal regions of Canada and the Caribbean. His recent book *The Inner Ocean* contains over forty examples of his meticulous approach to this very difficult and illusive subject. Bolt feels that his trip to the North has started him moving toward the more abstract style that preceded the sea paintings. The tools he used to create his arctic images reflect the natural forces that formed the landscape. Along with the traditional brushes, he uses paint scrapers, knives and sticks to drag the paint across the surface of the canvas in much the same way as the wind rakes the northern skies and glaciers scour the rocky surfaces.

These works exhibit the one quality that supersedes all others in Bolt's memory of the High North, that of a sense of violence. They show a dark and brooding aspect of the Arctic and speak of vast primeval energy still at work on the land. Notes from the journal he kept during the trip accompany the following reproductions.

The North affects people in many ways. For Ron Bolt it has been a source of aesthetic renewal and the beginning of a new understanding of the forces of nature and creation.

The paintings, drawings and prints of artist Ron Bolt can be seen in corporate, public and private collections across Canada. His commissions include the Fundy definitive stamp for Canada Post and a mural for the Ontario Provincial Government.

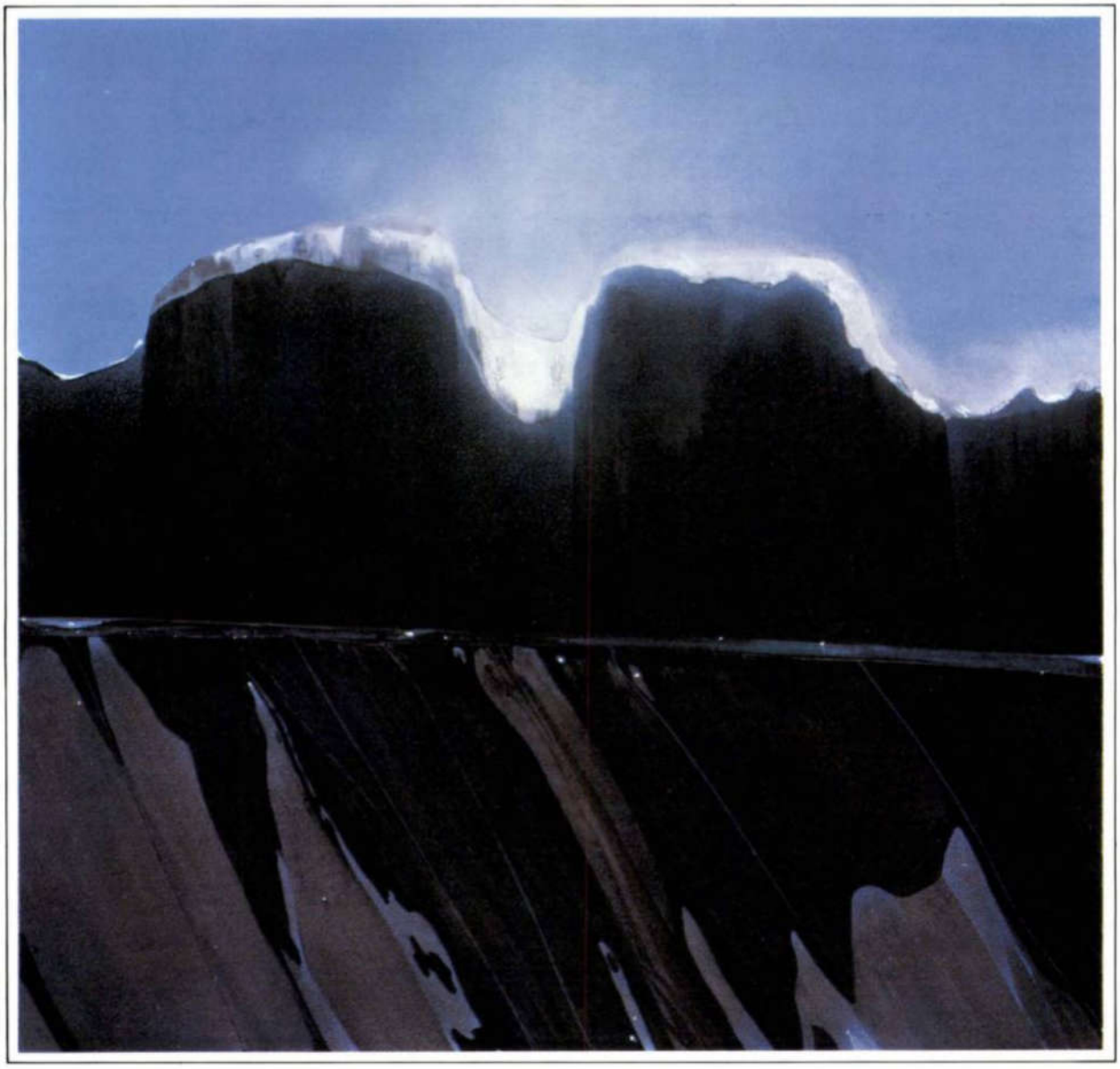
'Flying is a new experience now — small planes, low altitudes and no pretty stewardess to lull your senses with Scotch on ice and Hollywood on screen. Only the monotonous drone of the engine, the vibration of wing against air current, the empty silent North on the other side of the small window, and below, the arctic sea, purple-black and deadly cold. I feel a sense of disorientation — of being cut off from all things "south". Each settlement has been smaller than the last; each succeeding visual image more foreign.'

Toward the Unknown Regions.
45" x 68". Acrylic on canvas.

'The land seems immensely old and battered. Large boulders lie strewn about in haphazard fashion like some giant game of marbles. The surface has a raked quality to it. One can see the results of mighty forces — wind, erosion and cold.'

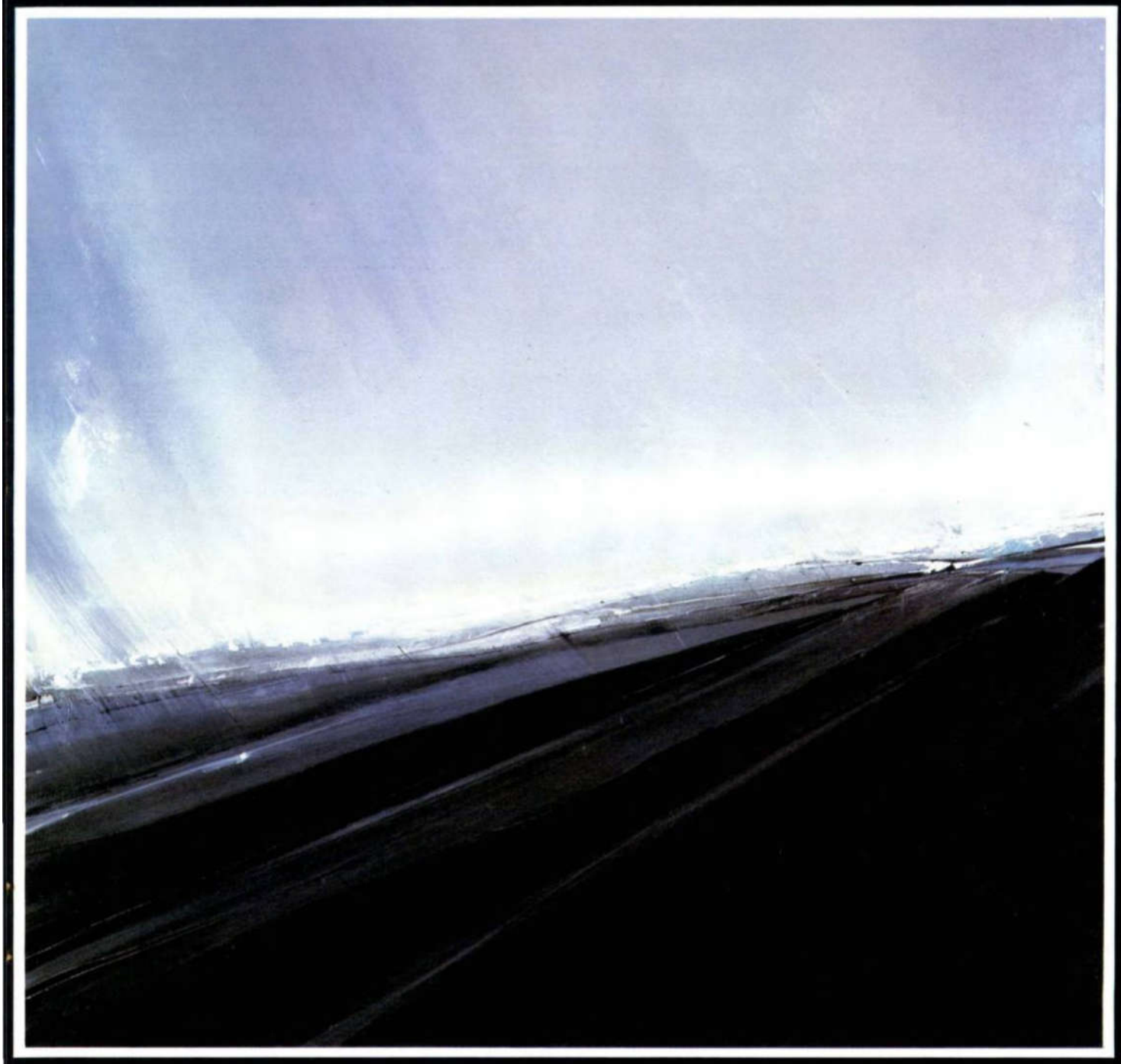
Evidence of Violence Series #6.
39" x 49". Acrylic on canvas.

'The land is so big that it is beyond appreciation in terms of scale. In fact, there is no scale as I am used to the term. No trees, no buildings, nothing to judge size against. The summit is always over the next ridge and the ridge that looks so close is five miles away. In all this space above the provincial borders [in the Northwest Territories] live only 45,000 people. We stuff that many into a football stadium "down south".'



Holman Ridge.
43" x 45". Acrylic on canvas.

'Always the evidence of past violence and the sensation that you are solitary witness to a visual record untouched for centuries. It is a precious place — a timeless place that, although few will see it, gives scale to every man.'



Coastal Violence Series #2.
48" x 50". Acrylic on canvas.

The Comfortable Arts:

Traditional Spinning and Weaving in Canada

By Susan Hallett

Ottawa writer Susan Hallet bases her article on an interview with Dorothy Burnham, and on Burnham's book 'The Comfortable Arts', prepared in conjunction with the exhibition.

Photographs are by the National Gallery of Canada.

Mid-nineteenth century sash, braided, with beads, of Ojibwa or Iroquois origin. 75 cm by 12 cm. From the McCord Museum Collection, Montreal.

IN THE EXHIBITION 'The Comfortable Arts: Traditional Spinning and Weaving in Canada', assembled for the National Gallery of Canada, Canadian weaving from the early eighteenth century until the 1950s has been treated as an art form for the first time. In fact, decorative and applied arts, the sister arts of painting and sculpture, are highly evident in the textile exhibition. Any craft object becomes a work of art when exceptional creativity goes hand in hand with exceptional technical skill. The collection contains many fine examples; the individual items speak for themselves.

A careful look at the exhibits — items once owned by men and women whose names were never inscribed in the pages of history — recalls to new life our vanished past. The collection, brought together by Dorothy K. Burnham, gives us tremendous insight into the ways in which the pioneers kept warm. She displays the coverlets and bench covers our ancestors used, the horse blankets they made for their animals, and the clothes they wore — even some of their underwear.

The labours of these early Canadian men and women confirm their innate sense of beauty, technical ability and artistry. These qualities appear in everything from decorative wall hangings and rag rugs and other textile productions for the home (such as napkins and tablecloths) to the rich and fruitful area of costume: its adornment for special occasions, and even for everyday use. The distinctive cultural backgrounds of the spinners and weavers add a richness to the collection.

Dorothy K. Burnham, once a professional weaver herself, was Curator of the Textile Department at Toronto's Royal Ontario Museum. One of the foremost experts in the field of Canadian textiles, she travelled across Canada to gather a final selection of 162 objects for the exhibition. From New Brunswick she was pleased to obtain a man's woven shawl. This garment is closely related to the Scottish plaids that are still a part of the full-dress uniform of the kilted Highland regiments. Shawls were a lifetime investment and were always carefully made of top-quality wool, expertly spun and woven. In this example, two shades of natural wool, white and dark brown, have been used alternately, two and two, in both warp and weft which, combined with 2/2 twill weave, 'makes a nice little pattern'.

In the western provinces Burnham found a lack of material 'since the timespan of their existance is so much shortened'. By the time the West was settled, she states, 'store-bought goods were readily available. The mail-order catalogues were a fact of life that affected all production on the prairies. . . . In spite of the availability of bought goods, home production still had its appeal.' Recent research shows that, especially in Alberta, a great deal more handspinning was done than had been realized.

The study showed that Ukrainians, Germans, Austrians, Poles, Romanians, Russians, Scandinavians and French spun wool for knitting yarns. Hutterites, Doukhobors and Mennonites also spun wool; in fact practically everyone in the West did, except those of English-speaking origin. Weaving was

Sofa cover woven by Anna Hudyma of Rycroft, Alberta, c. 1950. 1.72 x .86 m. From the collection of Mrs Tillie Wieczorek.

not practised, except in a scattered way — although 'weaving of a high order occurred among two groups, the Ukrainians and the Doukhobors'.

One of the fondest hopes of the organizer of the show is that within the next few years 'before pioneer memory dies of old age', research will fill in the empty spaces in our knowledge of western textiles.

According to Burnham a shortage of wool is a recurring theme in the history of textile making in Canada, although machine-spun cotton yarn was imported at an early date and was widely used. The native people, however, used the bark and inner bark of various trees and bast fibres from the stems of such plants as milkweed and nettle. They also had the wool from buffalo, mountain goat, sheep and, on the West Coast, from a small dog which they had domesticated. It seems that, although sheep were imported and raised in many areas, it was difficult to establish a flock because of the many hungry predators lurking in the forests and on the plains.

In the East great luxury was often displayed in the

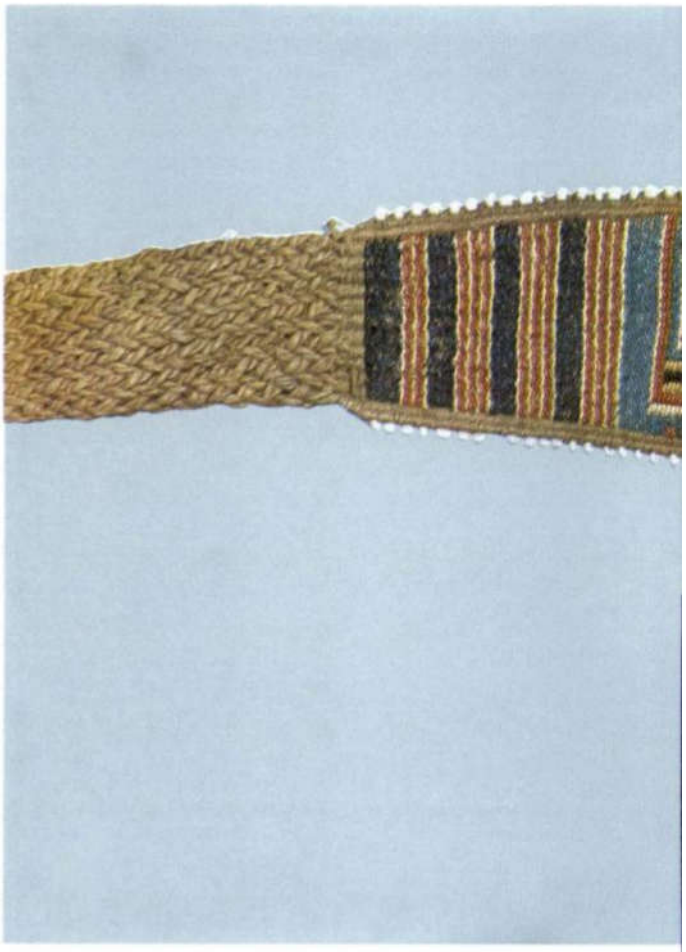
making of fine linen and lace; the so-called 'bridegroom's shirts' are really magnificent examples of such work. Burnham found that an 'almost incredible amount of labour has been expended on this article of dress'. The collection boasts one with the name 'David Barker' marked on it. It is of plain linen tabby 'as fine and even as any top-quality imported material, but it is known that it was grown, processed, spun and woven by a family from Prince Edward County, Ontario'. It has survived for about 156 years.

The wedding coverlets were also quite special. 'They cost $2 plus an extra 50¢ if two colours were desired and an additional 50¢ if the client wanted his name woven into the fabric.' One coverlet in the collection was woven by Wilhelm Armbrust in the Jordan area of the Niagara Peninsula. Armbrust, born in Germany in 1807, was the first weaver in Canada known to have had a loom with a jacquard mechanism. In 1823 he advertised in a St Catharines paper that he was ready to weave 'Fancy Coverlets on the New Improved Loom'; the coverlet exhibited is one of a pair he made for William and Ann Miller of Niagara-on-the-Lake in 1842. It is definitely a bridal coverlet because there is a special motif: two hearts hanging from a balance in the corner cartouche, along with the couple's initials and the date.

Although simpler types of weaving were usually done at home, anything as complicated as a coverlet was done by a professional weaver. The customer provided his own wool, already dyed in the desired colours. The patterns used were usually copies of accepted artistic styles.

A pair of purple socks of handspun wool, initialled and dated 1933, can also be included in the category of special items. They are of Hutterite origin and according to Burnham were a love gift. 'Living a completely communal life as the Hutterites did, no one owned anything and the only way a gift could be given was by the special making of something.'

One of the most historically interesting pieces to have survived is a woman's shawl from St Charles, Bellechasse County, Quebec. It was spun and woven about 1810 by Madame Gaumont, and was donated to the Royal Ontario Museum by Miss Ninette Lachance, the great-great-granddaughter of the weaver. As far as is known, the shawl is the earliest surviving piece of domestic weaving from the province of Quebec. It is made in two widths, joined with a well-matched seam, and is woven in 2/2 twill weave; the pattern has a tiny check that is surrounded by wide, dark borders, striped and banded with white. Another exceptional item from Quebec is a man's work shirt, which is late nineteenth century or early twentieth century. It is extremely difficult to find surviving pieces of hand-woven clothing for men and although a work shirt is a ultilitarian item, Burnham explains that these shirts are the ancestors



A woman's skirt length. Weft-faced tabby, probably woven by Mme Mathilde Melanson of Scoudouc, New Brunswick, about 1875. 2.48 m x 91 cm. A gift of Mme M. Laplante (Melanson) to the Musée acadien, Université de Moncton.

Burden strap, weft-twined weave with false embroidery. Centre 61 x 5.5 cm. Probably Ojibwa, from the Eastern Great Lakes area, before 1780. From the collection of the National Museum of Man, Ottawa.

Doukhobor carpet of knotted pile weave. 2.16 x 1.17 m. By Helen Hancheroff of Brilliant, B.C., 1925. From the Centre for Folk Culture Studies, the National Museum of Man, Ottawa.

Man's rabbit-skin parka from the Northern Ojibwa, Weagamow Lake, Northern Ontario. Height 1.3m., c. 1955. From the collection of the Royal Ontario Museum.

Altar Frontal of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary. Made by the sisters of the Ursuline Convent at Quebec City, in the early eighteenth century. Twill with wool embroidery. 0.91 x 1.79 m. From the monastère des Ursulines, Quebec City.

Boutonné coverlet of cotton, linen and wool by Nelsie Laforest, Île-aux Coudres, Charlevoix County, Quebec, c. 1870. 207.5 x 154 cm. National Gallery of Canada, Barbeau Collection.

A pouch of sealskin and stroud with quill weaving. 24 x 18.5 cm. Made by the Swampy Cree of Northern Ontario or Manitoba. Early nineteenth century. From the Speyer Collection in the National Museum of Man, Ottawa.

of the lumberjack shirts popular for present-day camping.

'Sometimes the simplest things are the rarest. Millions of yards of rag rugs were woven in Ontario in the nineteenth century, but only a few have survived.' One unusual survival is a pair of men's underdrawers, hand-spun and hand-knitted, made in Hibbs Cove, Conception Bay, Newfoundland, around the turn of the century. Wool from the sheep of the farm was used. It is of 'excellent quality, the spinning is even and soft, especially suited to the purpose.'

The Indian material is probably the most interesting, Burnham feels. 'I am developing a theory for the arrow sash of the North American Indian. It is almost sacrilege to suggest that any aspect of the garment's construction might have other than French origin'. As she shows in a diagram in the book *The Comfortable Arts: Traditional Spinning and Weaving in Canada* the technique that makes the complex pattern of the *ceinture fléchée* possible is that the threads, as they interlace, 'link with each other and make a turn to produce a colour change. There is no evidence that this linking and turning, this interlocking of the threads, occurs in the braiding of any part of the world, France included, other than North America.'

Peter D. Kalm, the Norwegian naturalist who visited Canada in 1749, observed in *Voyage de Kalm en Amérique*: 'Whereas many nations imitate the French customs, I notice that here it is the French who, in various respects, imitate the customs of the Indians with whom they are in daily contact. They smoke, in Indian pipes, tobacco prepared in the native way; they wear shoes in the Indian fashion, and garters and sashes like the Indians.'

The celebrated arrow sash became an important article of barter throughout the northern part of North America. Indian chiefs from as far away as the Seminole country on the lower Mississippi wore similar belts, and various sashes, bands and garters, both French and British, were imported to meet the demand. Eventually the Indians borrowed sash-making techniques from the Europeans, including those from L'Assomption County in Quebec, where sashes were produced in quantity for the North West Company through a well-organized cottage industry. Research shows that the workers made sashes by the dozen and worked in their homes from dawn till late at night. So great was the demand for Assomption sashes that the craft was eventually ruined by standardization and low prices.

The Doukhobors, who first came to Canada in 1899, were superb spinners and weavers who brought their skills with them from the Caucasus. They were followed by more than 7,000 of their brethren and still more Doukhobor immigrants at a later date. It appears that the Doukhobor way of life, which was totally communal and as self-sufficient as possible, forced them to supply all their everyday textile needs. As time went on their skills contributed to the making of 'amazingly elaborate carpets'. A tapestry-weave carpet created by Grace Kooznetsoff of Saskatchewan is a stunning example of a turn-of-the-century carpet made in a pattern that is a free adaptation of design from the Caucasus. The colour scheme is pure Doukhobor: vivid pink, blue, green and yellow.

It is interesting to compare this carpet with the extraordinarily beautiful and very untraditional sofa cover woven by Anna Hudyma of Rycroft in the Peace River District of Alberta. A remarkable Ukrainian woman, Anna Hudyma arrived in Canada in 1930. At first she wove in the traditional Ukrainian way, creating geometric designs. But then she began to use patterns she saw in farm magazines, such as petit-point and cross-stitch embroidery designs. Birds and flowers started to appear in her weaving. Her sofa cover, done in tapestry weave about 1950, has a toothed interlocking of the weft threads where the colours change. At each end Anna put a row of geometric motifs in a brocading technique. Her choice of reds, pinks, blues and greens show up magnificently on the black ground.

Traditional furniture in a Ukrainian home included wooden benches set against the wall. They were covered with hand-woven textiles, while the wall behind was covered with a long woollen runner hung horizontally. In the collection is an example of a traditional Ukrainian-type wall hanging, woven by Domka Panchuk who settled in Arabaka, Manitoba. The weaving is weft-faced tabby with natural hemp warp covered by wool banding in black and orange with fine lines of red.

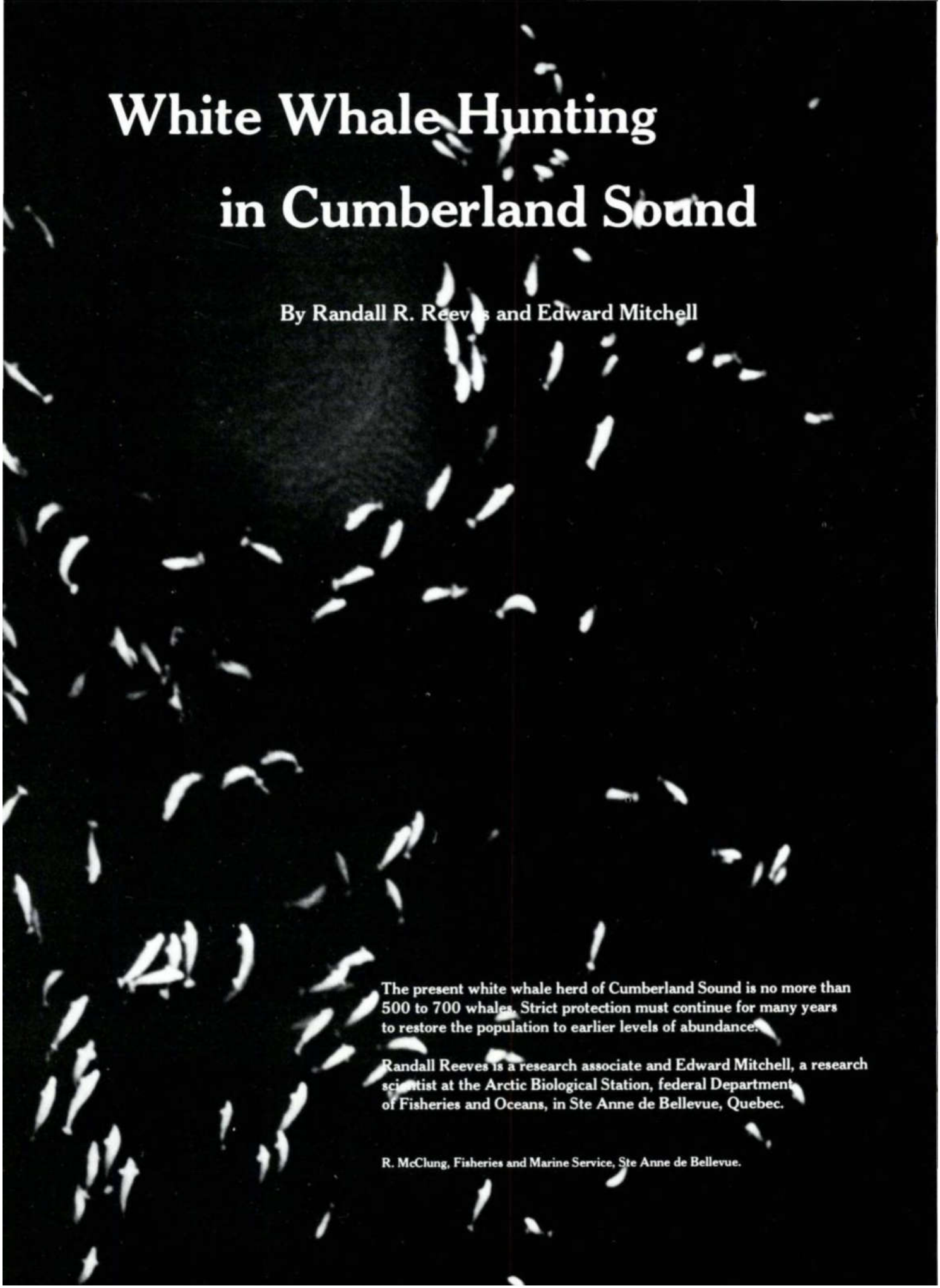
A particularly Asian-looking item is a knotted pile weave carpet which was made in 1925 by Helen Hancheroff of Brilliant, British Columbia. The pattern is simpler than is usual in Oriental carpets, but the method of tying is the Ghiordes knot, commonly used in the Caucasus; the goat-like figures in the centre probably have central Asian ancestry.

The textiles in the exhibition come mainly from the National Gallery of Canada and the National Museum of Man, as well as from both public and private collections across Canada, including the Royal Ontario Museum; Musée du Québec; The New Village Museum of the Kootenay, Doukhobor Historical Society, Castlegar, B.C.; Musée de Saint-Boniface, Manitoba; Doon Pioneer Village, Kitchener, Ontario; and Newfoundland Museum, St. John's.

'The Comfortable Arts' is a travelling exhibition which will appear at the MacDonald Stewart Art Centre, Guelph (16 January to 14 February); the Norman MacKenzie Art Gallery, Regina (6 March to 4 April); and the Vancouver Centennial Museum (24 April to 24 May). ◆

White Whale Hunting in Cumberland Sound

By Randall R. Reeves and Edward Mitchell



The present white whale herd of Cumberland Sound is no more than 500 to 700 whales. Strict protection must continue for many years to restore the population to earlier levels of abundance.

Randall Reeves is a research associate and Edward Mitchell, a research scientist at the Arctic Biological Station, federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans, in Ste Anne de Bellevue, Quebec.

R. McClung, Fisheries and Marine Service, Ste Anne de Bellevue.

AT ITS ANNUAL MEETING in June 1979, the Subcommittee on Small Cetaceans of the International Whaling Commission reviewed the status of arctic white whale or beluga populations. It recommended that steps be taken to reduce hunting pressure on the white whale population in Cumberland Sound, south-east Baffin Island. This herd, which traditionally summers in or near Clearwater Fiord at the head of the Sound, has undergone a long-term decline and now comprises a small fraction of what it was less than a century ago.

In June 1981 Canada gave notification of its withdrawal from the whaling commission and thus will no longer be bound by its recommendations or obliged to participate in meetings of this international forum for scientific and management discussions. The international conservation community nevertheless will continue to watch closely to see how Canada manages its domestic arctic whaling problem.

Stimulated by our own long-standing interest in the conservation of arctic marine mammals, and now by the attention directed at Cumberland Sound's white whales by the International Whaling Commission, we, at the Arctic Biological Station, set out in the fall 1979 to learn what we could about the catch history and pre-exploitation abundance of this whale population. Government scientists, consultants sponsored by oil and gas exploration companies, and even local Inuit hunters agree that the present herd numbers no more than 500-700 whales. Paul Brodie, then a graduate student at Dalhousie University and now with the federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans in Halifax, studied the herd in 1967 and concluded that about 769 whales were present at that time. He calculated, judging by oil returns at the Pangnirtung processing plant between 1948 and 1960, that there had been at least 1,750 whales in 1948, suggesting a marked decline between 1948 and 1967.

R. McClung

White whales: adults, juveniles, and a neonate in the foreground.

Our working hypothesis was that even by 1948 significant depletion had occurred. We suspected that a much larger white whale population had existed in 1921, when the Hudson's Bay Company post at Pangnirtung was opened. If this were true, then the present situation would look that much more grave.

To test this hypothesis, we devised an indirect method of estimating population size, for there were no reliable direct censuses of white whales in Cumberland Sound prior to Brodie's work during the 1960s. One way of assessing pre-exploitation abundance is to sum catches made during a short period of heavy fishing. Although there is an element of uncertainty in this technique, it provides an acceptable approximation of the minimum number of whales present at the onset of intensive fishing if the population declines steeply in abundance. We decided to try to use it for Cumberland Sound white whales.

The first step was to reconstruct the history of exploitation. We needed to identify the period or periods of heaviest catching and to gather accurate data on the number of whales killed. The more concentrated the fishery, that is, the shorter the peak period and the higher the catches during it, the more conclusive our results would be.

The early written history of Cumberland Sound is dominated by the activities of commercial whalers. Although John Davis explored the Sound in 1585, it was not until the mid-nineteenth century that white men began to visit it with any regularity. In 1840 William Penny, an ambitious young whaler from Aberdeen, Scotland, led a small contingent of schooners into what he called Hogarth's Sound, known today as Cumberland Sound. He was hopeful of opening a new whaling ground there. After a fruitless reconnaissance to the head of the Sound, the ships anchored near its mouth in early September and prepared to set sail for Scotland. Before they were underway, however, a large number of migrating

E. J. Peck Papers, Anglican Church Archives

Cutting up a bowhead whale at Blacklead Island, c. 1904. White whales, upper right, were also hunted to make whaling voyages pay.

bowheads appeared, heading into the Sound. Penny's intuition had been right.

In contrast to the contemporary but strictly pelagic, seasonal bowhead fishery in Lancaster Sound and along the east coast of Baffin Island, the new whaling grounds in Cumberland Sound offered the prospect of a more stationary enterprise. Penny himself was frustrated from taking advantage of this opportunity until 1853, by which time several American whalemen had already successfully 'wintered out' in the Sound. Blacklead and Kikkerton Islands quickly became bustling year-round centres of whaling activity, with Americans and Scots predominating.

Until the second half of the nineteenth century, the commercial whalers were single-minded in their search for bowhead whales. Although they hunted other wildlife for sport or for the pot, there was little economic incentive for the whalers to bring home anything other than bowhead oil and baleen. This changed when bowheads became difficult to find during the 1840s and later. Throughout the last half-century of the Eastern Arctic fishery, the capture of walruses, seals, polar bears, and smaller cetaceans became increasingly necessary to make whaling voyages pay. The white whale was a popular 'filler', particularly in situations where it could be caught in large numbers over short periods of time. Such situations arose frequently at two sites: Elwin Bay in north-eastern Prince Regent Inlet and Kingwah (now Clearwater) Fiord in upper Cumberland Sound.

Captain James Fairweather told of his experiences on the steam whaler *Aurora* in 1883, when close to 800 white whales were taken at Elwin Bay in one co-operative drive with the *Esquimaux*:

> Arrangements were made that one steamer went the one way along the land, the other the opposite way for an agreed-upon distance. Then both lay quiet for a while and started back for the bay again in time to meet each other at high water there. Each steamer zigzagged and made all the noise possible, by occasionally opening the boiler blowdown cock for a moment — hammering on the anvil — or making a noise in any way possible. When the two steamers met there was generally a great commotion, the fish jumping almost out of the water. The steamers had then to herd them into the bay. At low water the fish were aground and easily killed.

According to Fairweather, Clearwater Fiord differed from Elwin Bay in that a single steamer working alone could conduct a drive there, whereas two vessels and their crews were needed to drive whales effectively at Elwin Bay.

White whales are gregarious animals. Although we still know little about the nature of their social bonds, it appears that they have realized an evolutionary advantage from remaining together when under stress. They can be rounded up simply by forcing them into shoal water just before the tide begins to ebb, then blocking their exit with an intimidating cordon of sound. Their escape behaviour when confronted by a natural enemy, the killer whale, is also to flee to shallow water, there they sometimes strand themselves.

Heavy nets, sometimes with steel webbing, are used to capture white whales in the Soviet Arctic, and Norwegians at one time used dynamite to help drive them into seines around Spitsbergen. The nineteenth-century commercial whalers occasionally attempted to trap white whales in Cumberland Sound by drawing a net across the mouth of a fiord. Sir Joseph Outerbridge, aboard the steamer *Hector* out of St John's, Newfoundland, described such an attempt at Clearwater Fiord in 1873:

> Over a mile of seine was run out in an incredibly short space of time; the crews quickly secured it by nine anchors at even distances apart, besides chains and ropes from the shores. Then the steam launch and other boats plentifully supplied with stones, guns and spears, were ranged along the line of net . . .
>
> For more than an hour all was well — then was noticed a curious jerking at an anchor rope and supposing one of the fish was meshed there we steamed quickly over and found that the anchor was dragging. Then a voice from a boat close by shouted that the head rope was breaking.
>
> In a moment a new support was fastened but no sooner was that completed than the rope snapped

in another place and away went the two ends down the current at great speed.

Outerbridge's party managed to capture only 35 whales. Nearly a century later, in 1966, the Canadian Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development would try to revitalize the Inuit whale fishery in Cumberland Sound by introducing large nylon nets that could be set and anchored to block the entrance of Clearwater Fiord. Although these nets proved effective, the hunters failed to adopt them for regular use.

Our search of published and some unpublished material has allowed us to account for more than 20,000 white whales landed in the Eastern Arctic by Scottish whalers alone between 1868 and 1911. This does not include those taken by American commercial whalers and traders or by native subsistence hunters. It may not even represent the Scottish catch fully. Of the 20,000, we know that at least 6,000 came from outside Cumberland Sound, mainly Prince Regent Inlet. Unfortunately, landings for most years are attributed in compilations and summaries simply to 'Davis Strait', so the only way of determining specific localities is by consulting log-books and journals, few of which were readily available to us for this study.

Although white whale hide was already recognized in the early 1700s as an excellent source of leather — 'thin, yet strong enough to resist a musquet-ball' according to Pennant's *Arctic Zoology* published in 1784 — it was not until the middle of the nineteenth century that a strong demand for it developed in Britain and America. Mr C. Têtu of Rivière Ouelle, Quebec, patented a new process for tanning white whale skin during the early 1850s. The average price per hide quickly rose from about $40 to $150 after Têtu's discovery. Exceptionally large whales could be worth $200 apiece. Although it cost no more per unit than other leathers, the amount obtained from a single white whale was equivalent to that of twelve to twenty-five bovine calves.

The value of white whale leather stems from its unique combination of durability and flexibility. When wet, it swells to nearly twice its thickness, absorbing moisture and allowing little water penetration. Boots made of white whale leather were once popular among hunters and fishermen for this reason. In the nineteenth century much of the white whale leather imported by Britain was used to outfit Her Majesty's armed forces. The size of whale hides made them especially desirable for the manufacture of machinery belts. A continuous piece 60 feet long and 18 inches wide can be cut from a single white whale skin. Canadian mail-bags, tourist walking shoes, and fancy carriage coverings were made from white whale leather.

Beluga bootlaces had no equal. Various imitations used to be marketed, but an informed buyer could always distinguish the genuine article by grasping it with the thumb and forefinger of each hand about a half-inch apart, then contracting or pushing it together in the direction of its length. A beluga lace would increase its width by about one-third at the contracted portion. An average-sized shoe-lace made of white whale leather sustains a weight of about 300 pounds, compared to 40 or 50 pounds for one made of calfskin. Not everyone could afford beluga (often called porpoise) laces. At $8-10 a gross in 1904, they were worth six to eight times as much as those made of calfskin.

Flexible and durable white whale leather was used to make boots and bootlaces, mail-bags and machinery belts. Here small whales go up a ramp to be processed at Churchill, Manitoba. Undated.

Most of the whale hides shipped out of Cumberland Sound during the nineteenth century went to Dundee or Glasgow, where they were tanned. Hides heavier than 60 pounds were split (then referred to as 'half hides'), salted and dried before shipping. They usually arrived at the tannery in a salted condition, so the first step was to soak them in fresh water for two or three days. After a vigorous scrubbing, and more

George Anderson

Hide from a white whale is taken aboard the HBC boat 'Ungava' at Clearwater Fiord, c. 1946.

water-soaking, they were immersed in a lime solution, rinsed, and finally dipped in tannic acid.

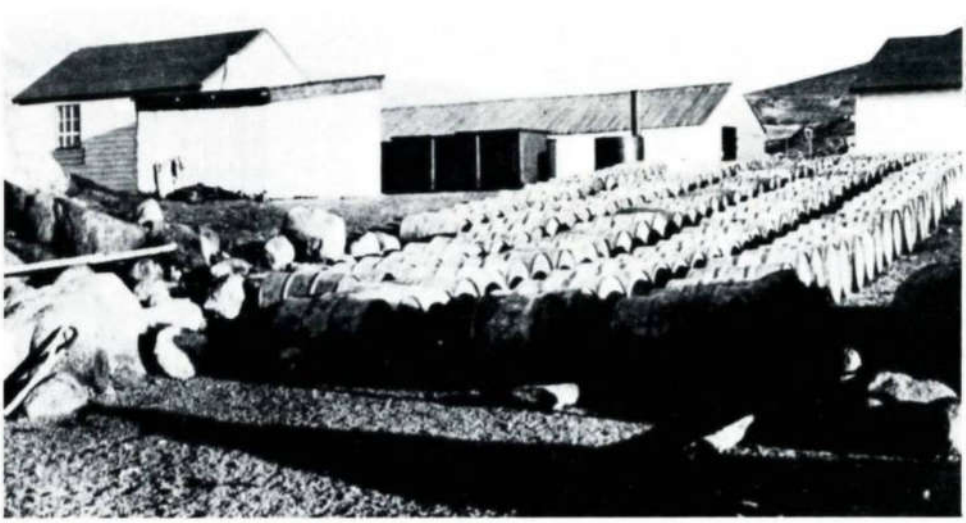
The skin of the white whale's closest relative, the narwhal, was also of value, although the ivory tusk obtained from male narwhals has come to be viewed as a more lucrative product then either oil or skin. Henry Toke Munn, a free trader and narwhal merchant in Baffin Island during the first quarter of the present century, based much of his business on narwhal oil, skins, and ivory, bartered from the Pond Inlet Eskimos. According to a report of the Hudson's Bay Company dated 1923, an 'ordinary' year's harvest at Munn's Albert Harbour station was five or six hundred narwhals, worth approximately $18,000. He supposedly served a special market in Peterhead for narwhal skins, which were exported to France for use in the manufacture of fine leather gloves.

In addition to the hides, the body blubber of white whales was often boiled down and its oil casked and exported. A large white whale can yield 80-100 American gallons of regular oil in addition to a quantity of the more valuable head oil, called 'porpoise-jaw oil', which was used primarily as a machine lubricant. White whale oil was valued as an illuminant in lighthouses, for it maintained its consistency despite the most intense cold. It is not odorous, and it gives a brilliant light. At least some of the white whale oil exported from Pangnirtung on the HBC's S.S. *Nascopie* during the 1920s and 1930s went directly to Halifax, where it was used as a base for fine soaps.

It was mainly for prime leather and oil, then, that the commercial whalers hunted white whales. These animals also played an important role in native subsistence throughout the Arctic. Peter Schledermann examined the middens in ancient Thule Inuit sites along the shores of Cumberland Sound. He concluded that for the early inhabitants of this area, who probably arrived some time between 1370 and 1650 A.D., 'the white whale was a very important quarry'. The low representation of white whale bones in middens, compared to that of ringed seal and caribou bones, for instance, can be explained in part by the method of processing the whales. It is impractical to carry an entire carcass from the beach to one's dwelling. Instead, early hunters, like their modern counterparts, undoubtedly flensed the whales at the site of capture, cutting and peeling the edible muktuk from the carcass and slicing off pieces of blubber and meat to carry home. The skull and skeleton probably remained on the beach, where the winds, tides, and scavengers destroyed and dispersed them. Such a pattern of utilization would leave little record for the enlightenment of archaeologists.

When Howgate's Preliminary Arctic Expedition visited the head of Cumberland Sound in 1877 to obtain dogs and skins for a planned arctic station in Lady Franklin Bay, the naturalist Ludwig Kumlien made the first European scientific investigation of the area's wildlife. He referred to the 'prevalent belief among the Eskimos, as well as the whalemen, that the mammals have disappeared from this section of the country at a wonderful rate within the last few years'. Although ringed seals and caribou were the real staples in the local Inuit diet, Kumlien observed that a 'considerable number' of white whales were taken by hunters in kayaks. Apparently the men still used traditional spears, with shafts made of narwhal ivory or of parts of a whale's jawbone, to kill whales and walruses at the time of Kumlien's visit. However, firearms were gaining in popularity and soon would supplant the traditional implements.

We have been unable to determine whether or not the pre-contact Inuit caught white whales by driving, but both Kumlien and Franz Boas, his eminent successor, made statements suggesting that they probably did. Boas, who conducted ethnological studies in Cumberland Sound in 1883, claimed that the people of Baffin Island herded white whales into



HBC Collection

White whale oil gave a brilliant and consistent light despite the most intense cold, and was valued as an illuminant at lighthouses. Here, barrels of the oil await export from the Pangnirtung plant.

shallows by throwing stones from aboard boats and kayaks. Possibly the commercial whalers learned their driving techniques from experienced natives.

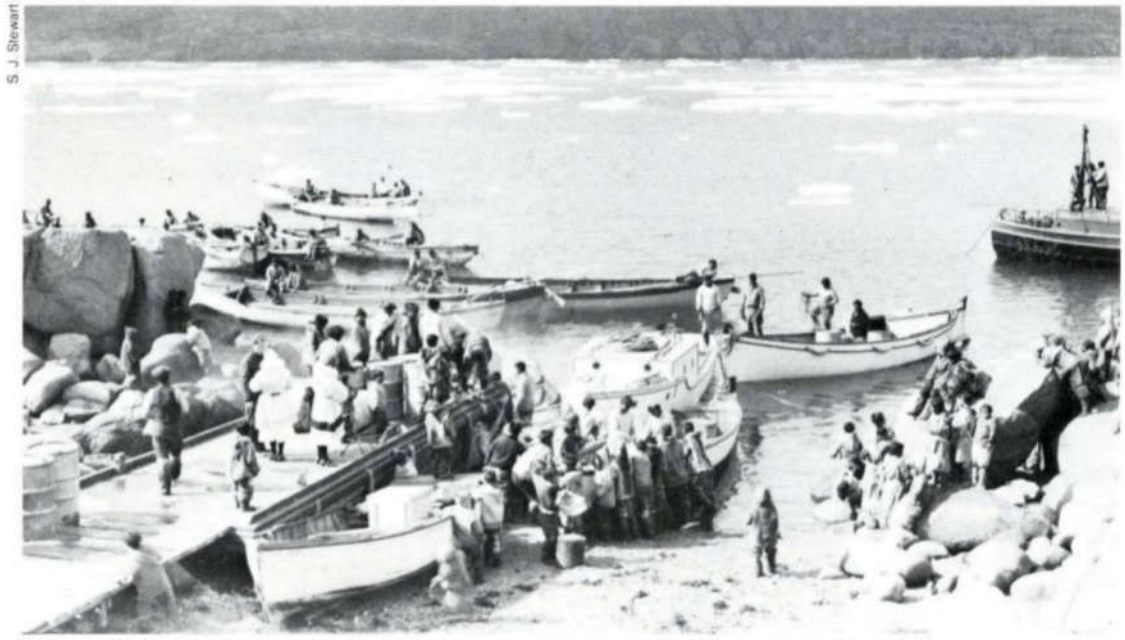
During the first decade of the twentieth century, the commercial bowhead fishery waned, and as it did, the pressure on the Cumberland Sound white whales presumably eased. The last known major catch by Scottish whalers was in 1901, when the *Nova Zembla* of Peterhead captured 418. The whalers and traders who called at Blacklead and Kikkerton continued to make occasional drives, but their efforts were desultory. In 1910 for instance, the *Scotia* of Dundee arrived at Blacklead and took aboard a crew of natives to help in a drive at the head of the Sound. Despite the assistance of the *St Hilda* and her crew, the attempt was a complete failure.

Inevitably, permanent trading posts appeared in many of the areas where whalers had established a relationship with local Inuit. Cumberland Sound was no exception.

Three private or 'free' trading companies (as distinguished from the Hudson's Bay Company) operated in Cumberland Sound during the first quarter of the century. The Sabellum Company had a post at Cape Mercy near the mouth of the Sound. In August 1913, the *Erme*, Sabellum's supply vessel, took on a crew of natives at Blacklead Island and proceeded to Clearwater Fiord for a white whale drive. Another Sabellum vessel, the *Rosie*, traded for 16 white whale hides at Frobisher Bay and five at Cape Mercy in 1924. The Cumberland Gulf Trading Co., owned by Robert Kinnes of Dundee, maintained a post at Kikkerton Island from about 1915 to 1923. Kinnes's supply ship, the *Easonian*, frequently conducted drives before returning to Britain with its load of merchandise. The HBC Pangnirtung journal for 8 August 1922, states: '. . . the Kikkerton schooner [is] up at "Kingua" waiting to make a drive of whales at next high tide.' Days later the *Easonian* burned and sank.

The Arctic Gold Exploration Syndicate, headed by Henry Toke Munn, bought out Kinnes's Durban Harbour station in 1914 and established a new post called Oshualuk at the head of the Sound in about 1918. Munn was a redoubtable opportunist, and he organized whale drives of his own, being drawn eventually into competition with the HBC. According to a Sabellum Company report, when Munn's supply vessel, the *Albert*, returned to Scotland in 1920-21 she had on board the produce of 201 white whales and two 'Lorry Load narwhal Ivory'. In 1923, after the HBC was well established at Pangnirtung, the post manager wrote in the journal for 6 August: 'The natives tell us that the opposition at Ooshooalik has made three attempts to get whales at Kingoa and Ooshooalik but failed. They are now out of ammunition.' Later that year the Company bought out the holdings of both Munn and Kinnes, establishing a virtual monopoly on trade in Cumberland Sound which was to last until 1965.

The Pangnirtung (Netchelik) post of the HBC opened in 1921. Evidently no whale drive occurred in this year, as all hands were busy during the brief summer season with construction and maintenance in anticipation of the coming winter. The snow and ice-bound months were devoted to fox and wolf trapping, 'deer' (caribou) hunting, and sealing. The following June, however, native assistants were put to work getting the boats in trim and making floats for whale nets. By 5 August the ice had cleared. On that day ten white whales were driven ashore near the post, and two whale nets were set. The first drive at 'Kingoa' (Clearwater Fiord) bagged fifty-two whales on 18 August. This inaugurated what was to become



The hunters of Pangnirtung prepare to trap white whales by beating pans and firing rifles from a line of boats strung across the entrance to the bay.

a profitable and intensive fishery.

Each year stationary nets were set near the post as soon as the ice had cleared. In most years a few whales were ensnared, along with many ringed seals, occasionally a bearded seal, and the odd 'trout' (arctic char). Natives not attached full time to the post would bring in hides and blubber whenever they had a surplus beyond their own domestic requirements. Netting and the individual efforts of native hunters, however, contributed only a small portion to the annual bag of white whales. It was the organized annual drive that made Pangnirtung the most important centre of white whaling on Baffin Island.

The drive fishery enjoyed a heyday during the 1920s, the animals being abundant and easily captured. The large catches of 600 in 1923 and 800 in 1924 were never to be repeated. The naturalist J. Dewey Soper happened to be in Cumberland Sound with the Canadian Arctic Expedition at the time, and he witnessed one of these spectacular drives:

> Large numbers of white whales having been observed swimming up the bay, they were held in the bay by racing motor-boats across the narrow entrance and by firing rifles and beating pans. When the tide dropped, the whales were left stranded, were then shot and skinned, and the carcasses permitted to drift out to sea on succeeding tides.

Organized whale drives were a highlight of the open-water season at Pangnirtung for nearly two decades. We know there was a successful drive in 1939, but after that year the annual catch rarely exceeded 250 whales. It is not clear whether annual drives continued to be organized on the same basis as they had been during the 1920s and 1930s. According to a report by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police in 1954, most of the whales rendered at the processing plant in Pangnirtung were at that time being caught by individual Inuit, hunting from their own boats. Certainly the Pangnirtung commercial white whale fishery was defunct by the early 1960s.

For our cumulative catch analysis we used the period 1923-1932 as the decade of peak catch. The total of white whales known to have been taken by or on behalf of the HBC Pangnirtung post in these years is 3,609. Considering that the stock was still large enough to allow a total catch of at least 877 between 1933 and 1939, and given Brodie's estimate of 1,750 animals in the population in 1948, there must have been more than 5,000 whales in the herd originally. It takes a minimum of 5 years for a female white whale to reach sexual maturity, and generally a single calf is born every 3 years. With such a slow rate of increase, a smaller population could not possibly have survived this level of exploitation. Ross Peyton, a former HBC manager in Pangnirtung, recalls that the Company conducted a survey of white whales in Cumberland Sound during the 1930s and 1940s. Their estimate of 3000-3600, made as it apparently was several years following the decade of peak catch, suggests that our estimate of 5,000-plus for the original population is conservative.

Since 1966 the killing of white whales in Canada has been restricted to subsistence hunters and to licensed commercial hunters operating in specified

George Anderson

After the whales are skinned, the blubber is cut into strips to be rendered down at the processing plant.

zones. Under the Fisheries Act, subsistence hunters are prohibited from selling or bartering white whale products. In Pangnirtung, however, according to J. B. Kemper of the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, 'Sale of muktuk to outside communities . . . has been at least partially responsible for a sudden rise in the landed catch.' In the years 1976-1978 more than 127 whales were landed per year. In addition, Kemper figures the practice of shooting the whales before harpooning them results in a significant loss of killed or badly wounded animals. On average, one whale is probably killed and lost for every two that are landed.

In May 1980 the Canadian federal government made a step in the right direction by applying an annual quota to the Pangnirtung subsistence fishery for white whales. However, even the present quota of 40 whales per year may be too high to allow any significant recovery of the stock, based as it is on optimistic recruitment figures and ignoring as it does the likelihood that there will be 'hunting loss' in which additional animals are killed but not landed.

Our point of view has been strictly that of the wildlife biologist. We recognize that contact with the whalers, and later with traders, missionaries, and finally representatives of the distant federal government, has wrought profound changes in the cultural and economic well-being of Cumberland Sound natives. The condition of the whale stock, our main concern, may seem trivial compared to problems of human welfare in the Eastern Arctic. But in fact the fortunes of the whales and the people are closely linked. The loss of a healthy white whale herd has

George Anderson

Barrels of white whale oil are loaded aboard the 'Ungava', c. 1946.

contributed to the erosion of the rich natural resource base that once existed in Cumberland Sound. Just as the survival of the whales has been cast in doubt, so have the alternatives become narrowed for the people who hunt them.

Biologically, we know of no reason why the whale population cannot be restored to earlier levels of abundance. For recovery to occur, however, strict protection from overhunting must continue for many years. The International Whaling Commission can offer expert advice, and the federal and territorial governments can write and revise their whaling regulations. But ultimately the people of Pangnirtung and other whale-hunting communities must come to see clearly for themselves what their choices are. ◆

BATTLE OF THE DRUMS

An ancient legend,
retold by Brian Lewis,
Deputy Minister of Education,
Northwest Territories Government

Illustrations by Germaine Arnaktauyok

MANY OF THE MYTHS AND LEGENDS of the Dene and Inuit attempt to explain the origins of conflict and co-operation between them. Whether this legend of the Battle of the Drums describes a historic event is difficult to determine. Nevertheless, the names seem real and the lake where the battle took place is real, so perhaps an incident did take place many centuries ago, and from the incident grew the myth, passed down from generation to generation, which explains the historic feud between the Indians and the Inuit.

Once, so the story goes, a small lake called Lake Wapiyao just east of 104° longitude in northern Saskatchewan was the site of the first great clash among the three great aboriginal peoples of Canada: the Algonkians, the Athapaskans and the Inuit. For on that lake long ago, maybe even long before Jacques Cartier, three men, a Cree, a Chipewyan and an Inuk, met in the springtime when the snow had melted away and only the frozen lake remained as a reminder of winter.

The first to arrive on the lake was Muskwa, a Cree from the south. He had never travelled so far to the north-west but when he saw the great expanse of barren land and the tracks of abundant game beyond the lake he was contented and camped among the spruce trees. He was sure that this was Cree land and was sure that should he meet a fellow man, he would be Cree, and friendly. Unknown to Muskwa and his family, however, another man and his family were approaching the lake from the west. This man was Kazaganeh and he belonged to the Chipewyan tribe. At the edge of the lake he stopped and the members of his family made their camp close to the lake in the shelter of a large rock. His people had never come this far east before and like Muskwa he felt secure and protected by the emptiness around him. He was proud that he was the only Chipewyan to visit this new country.

North of the two men within sight of both camps and half-way between them was an island running from east to west. Unknown to both Indian leaders, a man called Yapuk, an Inuk from the northern sea, approached with his family in search of wood for his weapons, his kamotik and his kayak. He was content to stay in the lee of the island since there was little daylight left and he wished to make camp. He had never been so far south before.

On the following day he would travel the last few miles to the south shore. As soon as he had made camp he climbed to the top of the island and looked out to the south shore where scattered among the rocks he saw the straggly trees he had come so far to get.

Each family spent a busy evening finishing the day's work and soon each camp was very quiet, with not a dog stirring.

The next day broke with brilliant sunshine falling on the glare ice. The women prepared the morning meal, the children played their noisy games and the men prepared themselves for the day's hunt. Throughout the day the only sounds were the children's cries, the occasional growl of the dogs left at the picket and the stirring of the fire beneath the cooking pots.

When the hunters returned that night the sky had turned first to orange and then to deep blue and very soon it was nightfall and the stars appeared.

Then under the dark sky, one by one, the three men, well rested after the hunt, brought out of their tents each one a drum. The drum of the Cree was small and faced with moose hide. It gave a sharp high note when it was struck. The Chipewyan's drum was much larger, about three feet across and sounded very sinister and solemn. The Inuk's drum was huge and covered with sealskin. It resounded with a deep, hollow ring across the ice.

At first each man tapped his drum and chanted his favourite song unaware of the muffled sound of the drums close at hand. Each man tapped and sang, oblivious to the sounds of his neighbour. When at last one became aware of the others he stopped abruptly and listened. But it was not an echo he heard and soon all three had stopped and they all listened fearfully in the darkness.

After a long silence, from the north beyond the island came the deep hollow beat of the sealskin drum, defiant and challenging. Almost immediately Muskwa, the Cree, beat out a short shrill tattoo on his drum. Then Kazaganeh joined in with the muffled solemn throbbing of his drum as he beat one side then the other with his open hand. And from that moment, throughout the night each man tried to drown out the others as he beat his drum and sang his songs. When dawn came Muskwa and Kazaganeh looked at their raw hands, rasped a last song from their busy throats and lay down to rest. But Yapuk, though he had long stopped singing, continued to beat his huge drum, sending deep rolls of thunder across the lake.

There could be no hunting that day. The men slept uneasily, their weapons at their sides, while the women and children whispered quietly to each other as they kept watch. At last night came and once more the setting sun spread sheets of brilliant colour over the snow, the sky, and the hills. And when the sky was dark, each man turned to his eldest son and told him to drum. The rolling of drums began. First the sealskin, then the moose hide, then the caribou. Soon the air was filled with the noise of drumming from the north, the east and the west. Then each man left his family and headed out in the darkness onto the open lake. The Cree and Chipewyan armed with bow and arrow moved north towards the deep booming sound, each wary of the other. The Inuk, carrying a long spear with a copper point, headed south. Flurries of snow and black clouds darkened the sky as the three advanced towards a point where they would soon meet. Meanwhile the boys, as the moments passed, beat more savagely on the drums as each one sensed the progress of his father towards the place where he would have to fight. Then the three men met. A break in the snow flurry and they saw each other. The Cree and Chipewyan drew their bows and before the Inuk could raise his spear there was a sharp twang of bowstrings and two arrows pierced Yapuk's chest. He fell at once face downwards on the ice and lay still. At once the other two strove to fix an arrow for a second flight. They desperately lifted their bows; two arrows flashed through the flurry of snow and both men fell. They both moaned and quivered for a few moments on the ice. Then both lay still.

The drumming continued across the lake but did not fade away until dawn. Then from the flap of each tent as first light broke, the women gazed across the lake and saw three black forms lying motionless on the lake. Then the wailing began, for each wife now knew the outcome of the Battle of the Drums.

One after the other, the wives of Yapuk, Muskwa, and Kazaganeh, accompanied by their children, pulled their sleds across the ice, picked up the bodies of their dead men and returned to camp. Then before the sun set that day the Dene warriors were buried deep in the sand on a hill by the south shore of the lake. And Yapuk, according to the custom of the Inuit, was placed on a surface of the earth and covered with a pile of rocks.

On this, the third evening of the camp on Lake Wapiyao, the camp-fires were smaller and the throbbing of the drums was slower and quieter than before, as each son grieved the parting of his father and tried to fight off his fatigue and his fear.

The next day Lake Wapiyao was deserted. The families had returned to join their tribes in the north, the east and the west.

From that time onwards, the Cree, the Chipewyan and the Inuit fought and killed each other every time they met.

And this happened for many years before people accepted government and the rule of law. ◆

Sault Ste Marie c. 1836, from a painting by George Catlin. Ermatinger's stone house is at lower left; Fort Brady across the river on the Michigan side.

Commerce, Civility and Old Sault Ste Marie

By Graham A. MacDonald

Part Two of a Two-Part Article

BETWEEN 1750 AND 1820, a fur-trade society developed around Sault Ste Marie based on the admixture of Indian, French and British Isles stock. This society was all-pervasive in a class sense and produced in its later stages some remarkable personalities whose main achievements involved the recording of a way of life which by mid-century was fast disappearing. In Part I (*The Beaver*, Autumn 1981), Charles Oakes Ermatinger was seen to be one of the strongest representatives of this fur-trade society. In what follows, the self-conscious stage of this fur-trade society's decline can best be appreciated by focusing attention on the remarkable figure of Henry Rowe Schoolcraft, American Indian Agent at Sault Ste Marie, Michigan, after 1822.

The Upper Lakes region had been redefined in terms of political arrangements in 1794 by Jay's Treaty, a belated negotiation which sought to establish British and American territorial claims according to the articles of peace set out at the end of the American Revolutionary War. The 1794 treaty eventually led to the establishment of Fort William,

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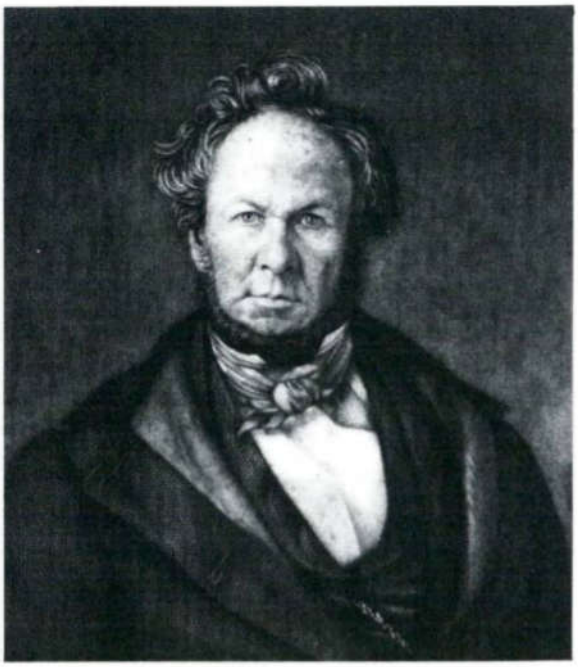
British traders having lost the legal right to employ the Grand Portage. In practice British and American traders came and went on each other's territory with great frequency. It was not until 1828, for instance, that Ermatinger was required to relinquish his post on Drummond Island which was then conclusively assigned to the United States.

In 1818 the United States established the Michigan Territory and its first Governor, General Lewis Cass, undertook an expedition of exploration of the Territory in 1820. One of his purposes was to invoke a United States claim to territory at the Sault with an eye to the establishment of a military fort and the extension of American sovereignty around Lake Superior. The Americans claimed a right to the site of Repentigny's old fort based on a clause in the 1795 Treaty of Greenville. This treaty had been signed after General Anthony Wayne had imposed a crushing defeat on the Wabash and other federated tribes at the Battle of Fallen Timbers. The outcome was to define what was Indian territory and what was United States territory open to settlement. The northern limit of the settlement line ran east-west from the Cuyanoga River (a southern tributary to Lake Erie) to Fort Recovery on the west. But certain lands to the north were also reserved for settlement by Article II:

> The post of Michillimackinac, and all the land on the island, on which that post stands, and the main land adjacent, of which the Indian title has been extinguished by gifts or grants to the French or English Governments . . .

When General Cass, his military party, and Henry Schoolcraft arrived at the Sault in 1820 to invoke this clause, the Chippewa (Ojibwa) of the region claimed that no such official grant had ever been made to the French by their forefathers. The use of force was threatened on both sides and it was only after the influential Mrs Johnston took all of the chiefs aside and convinced them of the futility of their position that the Treaty of St Mary's was signed. Chief Shingwauk (The Little Pine), who had fought with the British in the War of 1812, moved from the south side of the St Mary's River to the north side around present-day Garden River. He had signed the treaty under the fictitious name Lavoine Bart. Chief Sassaba refused to sign and, according to Warren, gained a certain notoriety by walking around Sault Ste Marie, naked, except for a wolf-skin hanging from his shoulders.

Although 1820 was not particularly auspicious in terms of United States-Indian relations, the appointment, a year later, of Henry Rowe Schoolcraft to the Indian Agency at Sault Ste Marie was a fortunate one from the standpoint of native culture. The period spent on the Lake Superior frontier was a creative



Henry Rowe Schoolcraft (1793-1864), explorer, scientist and ethnologist, who was United States Indian Agent at Sault Ste Marie, Michigan, from 1822 to 1833.

one for Schoolcraft. In time he made an outstanding contribution to the ethnology of the Algonkian peoples, and inadvertently, to the poetry of nineteenth-century America.

Schoolcraft was born in 1793 near Albany, New York. A precocious youngster, he quickly displayed a fascination for learning, particularly in languages. By age fifteen he had published articles and in 1809 he formed a literary society for the young men of Hamilton, New York. His advanced studies were interrupted by family financial troubles. The young Schoolcraft entered the family glass industry at Geneva and worked for a number of years in New England as the manager of a factory. During this period Schoolcraft obtained a good grounding in geology. The glass business declined sharply in 1817 in the wake of a flood of British imports and consequently Schoolcraft undertook the first major trip of exploration in that year. The publication of *A View of the Lead Mines of the Missouri* (1819) established his reputation as a geologist and soon he was appointed to the position of geologist in the Cass expedition of 1820.

Schoolcraft's first wintering in the Lake Superior country commenced in 1822. The opportunity to steep himself in the study of Indian ways was the main advantage of the long winter, for 'I have endeavored to prepare for the intellectual exigencies of it by a systematic study and analysis of the Indian language, customs, and history and character'. Reluctantly social, he noted that the 'amusements of

Map of the Old Northwest by H. R. Schoolcraft, showing the route of the Cass expedition of 1820.

a winter, in this latitude, are said to be rather novel'.

> Visits make up a part of the winter's amusements. We owe this duty to society; but, like other duties, which are largely connected with enjoyment, there is a constant danger that more time be given up to it than is profitable.

The scholarly civil servant was often going 'by invitation' to this home or that, but he had difficulty entering into the spirit of wintering society. On 28 November he was at Mr Siveright's 'at the North West House' for a gathering 'embracing most of the officers of the American garrison, John Johnston, Esq., Mr. C. O. Ermatinger, a resident who has accumulated a considerable property in trade, and others.' On 14 January 1823 Schoolcraft dined at Ermatinger's and again on 24 January where he 'first tasted the flesh of the *cariboo*'. The tenor of the following remark suggests that an evening at Ermatinger's was not all that he would have wished it to be: 'I do not recollect any wise or merry remark made during dinner, which is worth recording.' Even New Year's Day is recorded in his memoirs in rather analytic fashion and betrays a certain jealousy of time given up to leisure rather than work:

> This is a day of hilarity here, as in New York. Gayety and good humor appear on every countenance. Visiting from house to house is the order. The humblest individual is expected to make his appearance in the routine, and "has his claims allowed." The French custom of salutation prevails. The Indians are not the last to remember the day. . . . Standing in an official relation to them, I was occupied in receiving their visits from eight o'clock till three. I read, however, at intervals, Dr. Johnson's Lives of Rochester, Roscommon, Otway, Phillips, and Walsh.

Our understanding of the nature of frontier society in the early nineteenth century would be greatly diminished without the copious writings of Schoolcraft. The writings are reminiscent of those of the great Victorians both in style and in bulk. His memoirs, published in 1851 with the title *Personal Memoirs of a Residence of Thirty Years with the Indian Tribes on the American Frontiers*, are a little known but fascinating record of daily events, work habits, and personalities.

The Cass expedition of 1820 resulted in other changes at the Sault besides the establishment of the Indian Agency. Fur-trade clerk John Siveright expressed his opinions on the new mood on the American side in an 1823 letter to James Hargrave:

> Over the River the Change of late is great. You have heard of the arrival of the Americans, two hundred & fifty troops exclusive of officers & other followers. It could scarcely be credited the work they have done, & well done too, all by themselves. Not an individual of the place was employed by them.

The references were to the development of Fort Brady: 'Their Buildings are large well finished inside

Historic Sites Board, City of Sault Ste Marie

The dining room in the restored 'Old Stone House' of C. O. Ermatinger.
It was here on 24 January 1823 that Schoolcraft 'first tasted the flesh of the cariboo'.

better than any we could boast of at the Sault.' This presumably included a comparison with Ermatinger's house on the British side which does not appear to have been completed on the interior until about 1824.

Siveright had a good opinion of the Fort Brady detachment, the soldiers of which were 'made drudges of, continually hard at work. . . . The most rigid discipline is kept up among them, without that there would be no managing such a mixture of all nations.'

Of the officers, Siveright observed that they were 'a lot of fine fellows, Gentlemanly in their behaviour & men of information & ability'. Nor were the two communities inclined towards isolation:

> When Business or invitation induced me to cross, I met with every attention & civility from them & had free access to the Regemental Library, which being contrary to the rules I considered the greatest favor.

Schoolcraft had charge of this library in his first winter, but it was not the only library in the American Sault. Schoolcraft's father-in-law, John Johnston, was as well known for his cultivation of learning as he was for his hospitality. John Bigsby remarked in 1824 on the extent of Johnston's holdings: 'a thousand well-bound and well-selected volumes, French and English, evidently much in use, in winter especially'.

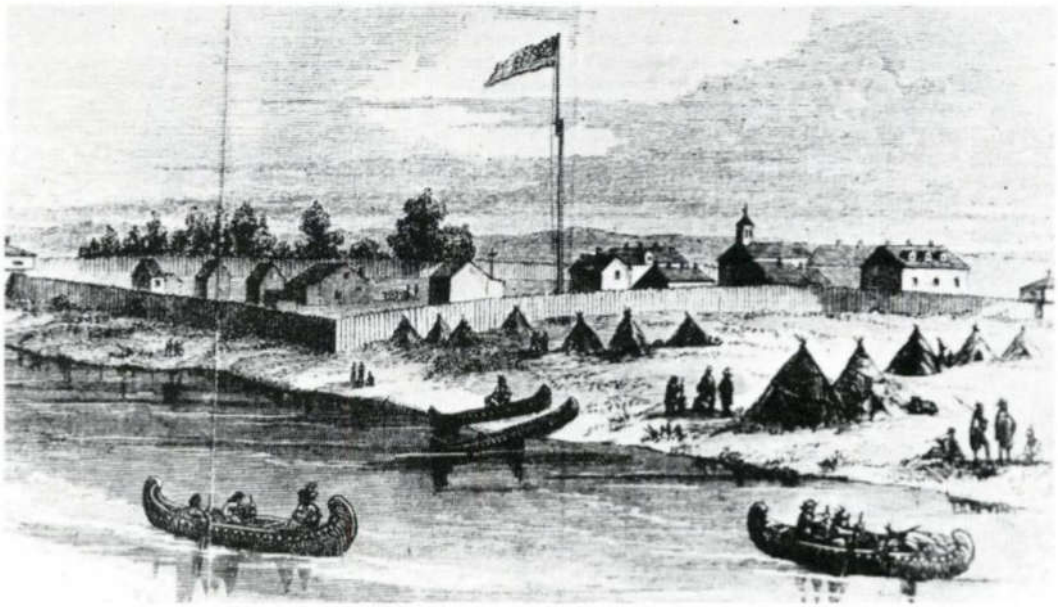
Of those who were impressed by the changing nature of life at the Sault, the most informative was perhaps Thomas L. McKenney. As Superintendent of Indian Affairs, he was at Lake Superior in 1826 preparing for the important Treaty of Fond Du Lac. His *Tour of the Lakes* published in 1827 is a rich source of comment on the daily life and habits of the Northwest populace. The state of education and medical practice at Fort Brady were subjects to which he gave some attention:

> The school, which is within the fort, is under the direction of a committee of officers, who prepare or revise the rules for its government. . . . Mr. M'Cleary, besides being well qualified to conduct so important and interesting an establishment, is a man of genius.

McKenney observed that 'The examinations in geography and astronomy, were highly creditable — indeed striking, there being only two of the twenty-four scholars, over ten years of age.'

McKenney was greatly taken with the daughters of John Johnston but noticed the different educational experiences afforded to each of them. Jane Johnston Schoolcraft had been given the most advantages through formal travel and education, but Eliza, the eldest of the daughters, 'has never yet got her consent to speak English'. McKenney was also impressed by the daughter of 'Mr. Armatinger' and spoke of her as 'very accomplished and polished and educated by the best masters of Montreal'.

In 1826 Schoolcraft began to produce, in the context of a local reading society, the first magazine in Michigan, and one of the earliest ethnological magazines in North America. The *Literary Voyageur*



Fort Brady, the United States military establishment built at the Sault in 1823.

was published variously between December 1826 and April 1827. Circulated to members of the Johnston family and other interested members of Sault society, it revealed the scope of Schoolcraft's growing interests and preoccupation with native lore. The efforts of the Johnston daughters were sometimes to be found in the pages of the *Literary Voyageur* as well. 'Rosa' was one of the pen names of Jane Schoolcraft. The evangelical romanticism of Schoolcraft's immediate circle is clear not only in the pages of his memoirs but in poems such as the following:

By an Ojibway Female Pen
To Sisters on a Walk in the Garden After a Shower

Come, sisters come! the shower's past,
The garden walks are drying fast,
The Sun's bright beams are seen again,
And nought within, can now detain.
The rain drops tremble on the leaves,
Or drip expiring, from the eaves:
But soon the cool and balmy air,
Shall dry the gems that sparkle there,
With whisp'ring breath shake ev'ry spray,
And scatter every cloud away.

Thus sisters! shall the breeze of hope,
Through sorrow's clouds a vista ope;
Thus shall affliction's surly blast,
By faith's bright calm be still'd at last;
Thus, pain and care, — the tear and sigh,
Be chased from every dewy eye;
And life's mix'd scene itself, but cease,
To show us realms of the light and peace.

— Rosa

Jane Schoolcraft became a favorite of McKenney's and he spoke of her 'highly finished compositions, in both prose and poetry'. In the 1830s Jane Schoolcraft and Anna Jameson became close friends. The author of *Winter Studies and Summer Rambles* described the meaning of Jane's Indian name: 'the sound which the stars make rushing through the sky'. This was taken to be equivalent to the 'music of the spheres'.

The salon was of course not the main setting for life at Sault Ste Marie in the 1820s. The fur trade was a time-consuming activity for men such as Ermatinger and John Johnston. Schoolcraft had the unenviable task of having to administer the Trade and Intercourse Acts of 1822. These acts set out the conditions for trade between American citizens and native peoples. They also excluded foreign traders from dealing with Indian tribes on American territory. The failure of the 1806 Trading House Act had led to these new pieces of legislation which gave considerable discretionary power to the Federal Indian Agent in how he regulated trade with the Indians. The notes which Schoolcraft kept as minutes of his meetings with various tribesmen from the Upper Mississippi Valley reveal a good deal about his way of handling his duties. Decorum, politics, and pragmatism can all be discerned in these notes.

Katawabeda, (Ermatinger's father-in-law) being from Sandy Lake in Minnesota, had to deal with Schoolcraft. The fur trader and the Indian Agent were regular guests in each other's homes, and were naturally aware of the relationships involved. In 1828 Katawabeda concluded a meeting with Schoolcraft in which he asked for a permit to take merchandise and

liquor back to Sandy Lake, for it was on 'the sale of which and not on hunting, he depended for his support'. Curtailing the trade in liquor was a major objective of American policy. Schoolcraft replied in the following terms, illustrating that he was aware of the tactic which would allow Ermatinger to gain access to United States trade territory in contravention of the law:

> I took occasion to inform him, that I had been well acquainted with his standing, character and sentiments. . . . That I knew him to be friendly to the traders who visited the Upper Mississippi, desirous to keep the Indians at peace, and not less desirous to keep up friendly relations with the authorities of both the British and American governments. But that I also very well knew that whatever political influence he exerted, was not exerted to instil into the minds of the Indians sentiments favorable to our system of government . . .

In Schoolcraft's version of the minutes, the language is measured and the mood of discourse appropriate to that of gentlemen involved in relationships of some permanence. Propriety was important but it was also important to speak one's mind in ways which would not be taken as offensive. An incident such as this one must have tested all of Schoolcraft's powers of objectivity, for in addition to having to enforce the spirit of the American liquor laws, there was his own personal commitment to the temperance movement of the times. He and Ermatinger, in terms of disposition, were at opposite poles.

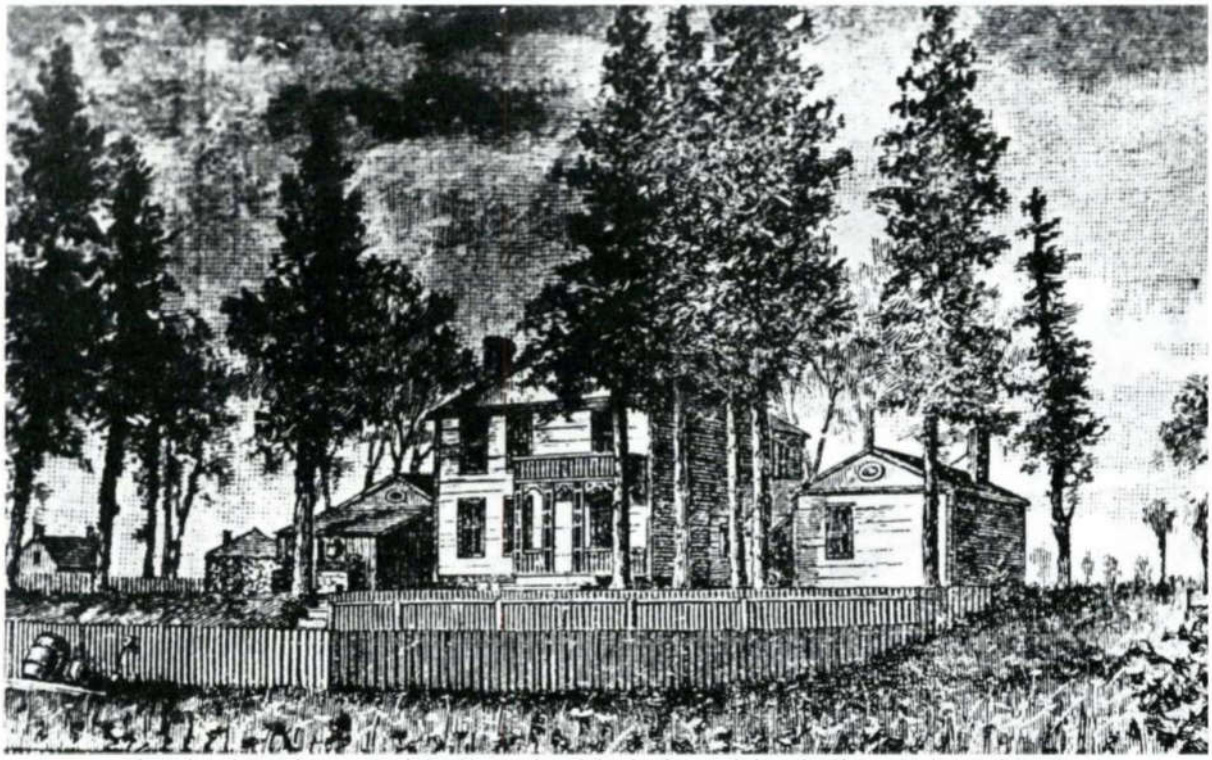
Schoolcraft was a disciplinarian in work and methodical in requesting his own privacy. He did not have time to waste on what he took to be inconsequential. Yet his correspondence was voluminous. He was in touch with a large segment of international society, and in this sense he was the most social of men. His writings and reputation were established by 1821 when he published the *Narrative Journal* of his travels in the Northwest. His native stories began to work their way into print by 1829, sometimes at the hands of those who pirated his work, such as John Ahearn Jones. Concerned that in the wrong hands the tales might lose the 'roughness that gave them their characteristic originality' Schoolcraft published *Algic Researches* in 1839. This book established the soundness and thoroughness of his ethnographic gathering. Shortly after this date Henry Wadsworth Longfellow began to take an interest in Schoolcraft's work. The poet had long been interested in Indian themes, but it was some time before he actually defined a project. When Schoolcraft finally started to publish the great six-volume *Historical and Statistical Information Respecting the History, Condition and Prospects of the Indian Tribes of the United States* in the 1850s, Longfellow again turned to Schoolcraft for

Illustration for Longfellow's 'Song of Hiawatha', by Edward A. Wilson. From 'Favorite Poems of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow' edited by Henry Canby. Copyright c. 1947 by Doubleday and Co., Inc.

ideas. On 22 June 1854 Longfellow wrote in his diary:

> I have at length hit upon a plan for a poem on the American Indians, which seems to me the right one and the only. It is to weave together their beautiful traditions into a whole. I have hit upon a measure, too, which I think the right and only one for such a theme.

The 'measure' which Longfellow was referring to owed much to his appreciation of the Finnish national epic, the *Kalevala*, brought together in Finland as recently as 1835. Longfellow's enterprise was, of course, the creation of one of the great abiding mythic creations of North American literature — the *Song of Hiawatha*. Having first thought to employ the name Manabozo, the great cultural hero of the Algonkians about whom Schoolcraft had written much, Longfellow settled finally on the somewhat parallel figure of Hiawatha, a noted personage in Iroquoian legend and history. Longfellow was not reluctant to admit his debt to Schoolcraft's researches for his sources but was less patient with suggestions that he had plagiarized both rhythms and content from the *Kalevala*. There were similarities, but similarities only, of incident and character in the tales of the two traditions. Stylisti-



The Indian Agency house at Sault Ste Marie, where Schoolcraft compiled much of his research on Indian tribes.

cally, Longfellow maintained that 'the parallelism of repetition is as much the characteristic of Indian as of Finnish Song'.

Having spent many hours poring over the large volumes of Schoolcraft's *Historical and Statistical Information,* Longfellow could not help but be impressed by the elaborate illustrations, many of them reproducing pictographs and other symbols which were from native hands. As a student of languages and folkways, Schoolcraft did much to advance the view that just because non-Europeans appeared exotic in their productions this was not necessarily a sign of incoherence. The presence in the *Song of Hiawatha* of an entire section entitled 'Picture Writing' is instructive, and reveals the openness with which those who have been identified as 'Romantics' beheld cultures other than their own:

> On the grave-posts of our fathers
> Are no signs, no figures painted;
> Who are in those graves we know not,
> Only know they are our fathers.
> Of what kith they are and kindred,
> From what old, ancestral Totem,
> Be it Eagle, Bear, or Beaver,
> They descended, this we know not,
> Only know they are our fathers.

Here in poetic form, freshly distilled from Schoolcraft's works, are some of the favourite images of the scarcely born disciplines of ethnology and anthropology. This is the language of 'kinship' and 'totems' and 'clans'. Hiawatha was portrayed as the giver of languages and symbolism to a whole people, and if this system of communication was esoteric to European minds, it nevertheless had its logic.

The *Song of Hiawatha* was completed many years after the Sault had lost most of its interesting citizens of the 1820s. In 1828 Ermatinger moved to Montreal following the loss of Drummond Island to the Americans and the subsequent closing of his fur post there. The loss of Drummond Island had also stimulated a major migration of many of the old French-Indian families based there and at the Sault, to Penetanguishene on southern Georgian Bay. New work was to be found there in connection with the construction of British defence establishments which would replace the Drummond Island fortifications. John Johnston Sr died in the same year as Ermatinger's departure, and Schoolcraft had increasing business in Detroit both of a literary nature and as a member of the Territorial Legislature. Life in the Old Northwest was changing. The central role which the fur trade had occupied in organizing human activity and relationships in the wilderness began to

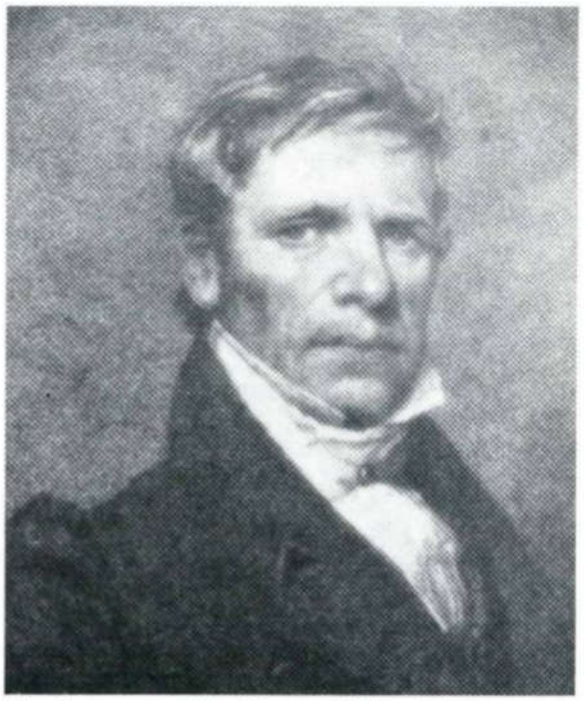
give way rapidly in the 1830s as men concerned with promoting transportation, settlement and mining came to the forefront.

Schoolcraft was not indifferent to this new mood of expansion in the Old Northwest. His ambitions as an explorer were to emerge once again in 1832 when he led an expedition to the source of the Mississippi River. The objectives of the expedition were several and included the vaccination of the Indians against smallpox. The physician whom Schoolcraft chose to accompany him was twenty-three-year-old Douglas Houghton, a brilliant young man of diverse talents, who in 1837 would become the first Chief Geologist for the new state of Michigan. His reports for the Geological Survey did much to stimulate the copper boom of the 1840s in the Upper Michigan Peninsula and to revive the canal lobby.

From 1828 to 1833 the house of C. O. Ermatinger stood empty, an appropriate symbol of the change which fur-trade society was undergoing. Even more symbolic perhaps was its occupancy in 1833 by the Reverend William McMurray, an Anglican missionary and brother-in-law to H. R. Schoolcraft. McMurray was just one of the many churchmen who would come to the Lake Superior frontier in the 1830s in response to a slowly increasing population and as a result of a widespread revival in religious fervour, one which sought to renew European obligations to the native people.

There were some, however, for whom the spirit of progress or religious sentiment had little appeal. On occasion the views of such persons serve to magnify the ambiguous claims which can be made on the emotions of persons on the frontiers of civilization. In 1828 the distressed figure of John Tanner appeared at Sault Ste Marie. He was born about 1780, was captured by Shawnees in 1789 and passed thirty years as an adopted citizen among various native tribes. In 1817 he attempted to rejoin his white relatives in Kentucky but was unable to make the transition. Returning to Lake Superior in 1828, he was given a job by Schoolcraft as an interpreter between United States government officials and the native people. The publication in 1830 of his *Narrative of Captivity* had been accomplished with the help of a Dr Edwin James and its content is a valuable and objective account of what, in social terms, was now being left behind. It is the story of a man who, from the beginning, had been stretched between two ways of life, both of which were becoming less and less viable. In 1828, Schoolcraft described him:

> Tanner was a singular being — out of humour with the world, speaking ill of everybody, suspicious of every human action . . . and yet exciting commiseration by the very isolation of his position.



John Tanner, captured by Indians as a child, arrived at Sault Ste Marie in 1828. His book 'Narrative of Captivity' was published in 1830.

Relations between Tanner and the citizenry of Sault Ste Marie became ever more strained until his disappearance in 1846 during what became known locally as the 'Tanner Summer'. He was suspected of the murder of Schoolcraft's brother James, but later evidence suggested that a member of the local militia was the guilty party. Despite a nearly universal prejudice against him, Tanner's *Narrative* remains one of the most interesting documents of the period.

Misfortune tended to dog Schoolcraft after 1827 when his two-year-old son died. Jane Schoolcraft, always frail, died in 1842 while her husband was abroad in Europe. At the time of her death, he had already left his post at Mackinac for New York City. Much of his great work still lay ahead of him. In New York he was to be one of the main founders of the American Ethnological Society. The opportunities for the unique kind of field work which he had undertaken in the 1820s were gone however. Time and circumstance had thrust him into a context in which he became the enthusiastic witness and recorder of a way of life which was self-consciously on the verge of disappearing. In order for him to make the most of this opportunity he had become a part of that way of life itself — the old fur-trade society composed of its long-standing balances of French-Indian-English blood. If, unlike C. O. Ermatinger or John Johnston, Schoolcraft was not always comfortable in this unique kind of mixed-blood society, he nevertheless played his part with dignity and enthusiasm. ◆

WILD MAMMALS OF WESTERN CANADA

By Arthur and Candace Savage. Western Producer Prairie Books, Saskatoon, Sask., 1981. 209 pp., illus. $34.95.

Reviewed by R. W. Sutton

Engaging the services of a talented wildlife artist for the accurate, sympathetic portrayal of mammals (or, for that matter, birds or reptiles or fishes) is a high-priced matter. Yet, if they are to be at all effective, popular books on animals must be illustrated. Too often the sad result has been the production of good textual material supported by photographs, usually in colour and all too frequently substandard to the point of being worthless. These, more often than not, fail to delineate the salient characteristics under discussion. Poor colour printing and sloppy registration have often marred potentially good material.

What a delight, then, to take the first careful riffle through this book and to be greeted by colour photographs that are not only spectacularly sharp but almost without exception succeed in portraying the characteristics and attitudes of the mammals under discussion. This absolutely superb photographic illustration of a book on mammals is a rare achievement. Just how it was accomplished we are not told. Certain it is that the authors commanded such respect that highly talented wildlife photographers in North America were persuaded to be represented here.

While those who contribute articles to the various scientific and professional journals scrupulously adhere to the practice of acknowledging any assistance they have received from their colleagues, this has not always been the case where the so-called 'popular' works are concerned. For this reason the good, solid, no-nonsense acknowledgements that preface *Wild Mammals of Western Canada* as well as the 23 pages of references cited are a welcome example of the writers' integrity. A debt is owed. A debt is graciously repaid.

Under the heading 'Scientific Advisors', the authors acknowledge the contributions of seven eminent specialists in mammalogy. Among these is Dr Robert Wrigley, Museum Director and Curator of Mammals and Birds, Manitoba Museum of Man and Nature. Bob Wrigley provides, in addition, a thoroughly informative introduction which describes the mammalian characteristics. 'Any species that possess hair, however sparse, and mammary glands, however primitive, can unequivocally be classified as mammals. (Hence, people clearly number amongst those that qualify.)' Dr Wrigley provides, in effect, a sound base for the reader who, at his or her own pace, may then proceed to enjoy this, one of the best works on Canadian mammals yet to be offered to the layman.

The authors' text moves, but does not stolidly march, through the various orders of mammals in proper taxonomic order, beginning with the primitive shrews and moles, on through the bats, rodents, whales, dolphins and porpoises, carnivores, pinnipeds (sea lions and seals) and the cloven-hoofed mammals such as deer, pronghorn, bison, goats, muskoxen and the wild sheep.

This process, and scientific procession, you may say, characterizes any number of books on mammals offered on the market. These say, all too clearly, you *shall* learn, you *shall* absorb, you *shall* emerge pronounced completely full. Not so in the case of this particular volume. While specifically instructive, the deceptively casual style conceals the fact that the reader is exposed to a pleasant learning process on a 'put it down' or 'pick it up' basis. To the authors go full marks for a brilliantly informative text with which the uninformed reader can relax, consult at leisure and emerge, perhaps unwittingly, the better for it.

One learns, with dismay, that the senior author, Arthur Savage, died in May of 1981 at the age of thirty-two, survived by his wife Candace and their daughter Diana. One hopes that it is not too fatuous to suggest that there are few, if any authors who, at such an early age, have been able to leave to Canadians such an impressive, enjoyable and timeless legacy.

Richard Sutton is Chief of Interpretation for Parks Canada, Prairie Region.

Screaming and pushing, two red foxes engage in a ritualized contest. Photograph by Lynn Rogers in 'Wild Mammals of Western Canada'.

THE TRANQUILITY AND THE TURBULENCE
The Life and Work of Walter J. Phillips

By Roger H. Boulet. M. B. Loates Publishing, Markham, Ontario, 1981. 232 pp., illus. $80.00.

Reviewed by Leo R. Simoens

'It works.' In designer's language this phrase is used sparingly and carries considerable weight. It applies to the book *The Tranquility and the Turbulence: The Life and Work of Walter J. Phillips* by reason of its text, expertly documented by the author, R. H. Boulet, and its exquisite graphic design and superb production.

The multi-media, silver-foil dust jacket is a fine piece of design and printing, incorporating full colour and embossing. Considering the quiet oriental philosophy inherent in the art of W. J. Phillips, it is perhaps somewhat overwhelming and out of context. Phillips possibly would have been quietly embarrassed by its high-technology quality if he were to see it. He would, however, be impressed and reassured by the faithful reproduction of his most engaging water-colour 'White Water' which is prominently displayed and sets the course for the visual journey ahead. The hardcover binding, hidden by the opulent jacket, is superb. The silver fabric cover, embossed with the logotype repeated on the jacket and title page, and the deep blue endpapers 'work', effectively contrasting with the warmer tones of the colour reproductions found inside.

The book is structured around a theme that reflects the kind of decorative editorial design prevalent in the early 1900s, the time of Phillips's formative years. Happily the 'art nouveau' style is not overdone but reflects in an unobtrusive way the character and form of Phillips's work. The type-face 'Benguiat' is a good choice and generally works well. The typography, though it relates effectively with the other page elements, is not without some fault. The letter spacing is too tight for this condensed type-face and the word spacing inconsistent in some text areas of the book. The red titles and initials contrast with the black type and rules and usually make an effective and readable page.

The major works in water-colour or block print are generously placed on a full page, making them easy to view and study. Often they are accompanied on the opposite page, by the artist's preliminary sketches in pencil and water-colour. The book ends with a functional, well-devised index to the artist's complete graphic works, printed black on grey stock featuring many of Phillips's wood engravings.

The quality of the reproductions throughout the book, whether black and white or colour are excellent. Obviously the art was sensitively photographed. The reproductions are printed with all their subtitles on a fine, bright white cover stock which succeeds admirably in bringing out the pure colour. The presswork is outstanding, culminating in a fine piece of graphic work.

This book is a tribute to a sensitive and dedicated artist, produced by caring people who are artists in their own right.

Mr Simoens of Winnipeg is an artist and graphic designer.

The INDEX to Outfit 311, Summer 1980 to Spring 1981, is now available from THE BEAVER Office at Hudson's Bay House, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3C 2R1

Price $1.25

LADY FRANKLIN VISITS SITKA, ALASKA, 1870:
The Journal of Sophia Cracroft, Sir John Franklin's Niece

Edited by R. N. DeArmond. Alaska Historical Society, Anchorage, Alaska, 1981. 134 pp., illus. $17.00.

Reviewed by Evadene Burris Swanson

When Lady Jane Franklin, the widow of Sir John, visited Sitka, Alaska, in 1870 she brought a companion, her niece, Sophia Cracroft. Miss Cracroft kept a diary of their adventures and drew sketches of the town which then had a white population of 600, and about 1200 Indians living outside the stockade. The Alaska Historical Society published the journal through permission of the Scott Polar Research Institute of Cambridge, England, which owns the original. The book adds to the growing literature on the fur trade in the West in the second half of the nineteenth century.

Sir John Franklin was lost on his third voyage of Arctic exploration in 1847. His wife Lady Jane persisted in the search for records of the expeditions long after the fate of the vessels had been established. She visited Victoria, Vancouver Island, in 1860; the Franklin range of

mountains, Cracroft Island, and Sophia Inlet in that vicinity were named for the family. In 1870, Lady Jane at 78 and Sophia at 54 were in San Francisco where they met a Dr David Fox who had been on one of the search vessels financed by Lady Franklin. This encounter prompted the women to arrange passage for Sitka and to look for more news. They stopped in Victoria to renew old friendships from the earlier visit, arrived in Sitka 12 May 1870 and spent over a month in the American village.

The women were warmly welcomed and entertained. The military staff, merchants, and other townspeople vied with one another for stories or souvenirs of the famous explorer. Lady Jane and Sophia visited Indian homes and bargained for baskets and handmade wooden boxes. Sophia recorded her observations on the Indians, the rainy weather, and the appearance of the former Russian buildings. The editor, Robert De Armond, was born in Sitka and supplies a vivid background description of the Sitka of 1870.

The combination of De Armond's careful editing and comments and Sophia Cracroft's lively observations provides a fascinating book.

Evadene Swanson of Fort Collins, Colorado, has written a number of papers on pioneer history for the University of Minnesota Press.

JEWS
An Account of Their Experience in Canada

By Erna Paris. Macmillan of Canada, Toronto, 1980. 304 pp., illus. $16.95.

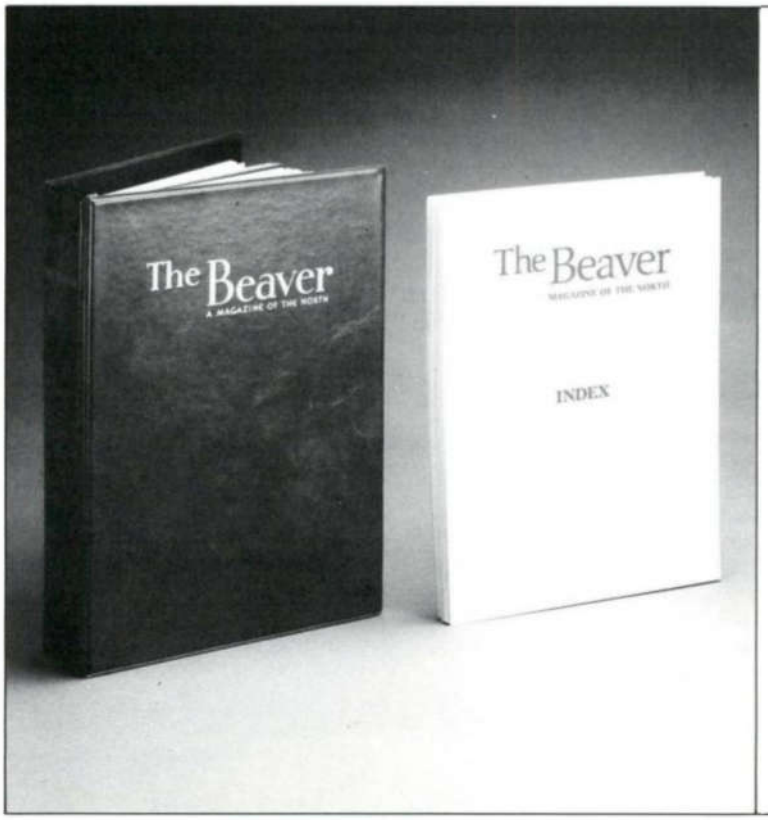
Reviewed by Abraham Arnold

The title of this book belies its content. It is, more correctly, an account of certain selected experiences of the Jews in Canada. The opening section on the Jews of Quebec is the most comprehensive, while the section on Toronto deals only with the Jewish left-wing movement. The third section on the West deals almost entirely with Jewish farmers. Of course Erna Paris states in the introduction that her book is 'not intended to be a comprehensive social history of the Jews in Canada'. (We are still waiting for that comprehensive history of Canada's Jews, an undertaking which was awarded to an eastern academic historian in the early 1970s by the Multiculturalism directorate in the Department of the Secretary of State in Ottawa.)

In her historical introduction to the section on Quebec and to a lesser extent in the other sections as well Erna Paris's work shows the weakness of relying on secondary sources; as a result of which she repeats certain errors.

Allowing for these reservations it must be stated that Erna Paris has produced a book which is generally well written and deals with several important aspects of the history of the Jews in Canada. It is probably the best work on the subject since the late 1960s.

In her first section, 'The Jews, Quebec and Parliament Hill', Paris deals with the growth of the organized Jewish community in Montreal from the late 1890s. She writes with some enlightenment of the conflict between 'Uptown' and 'Downtown' Jews, of anti-Semitic influences in Quebec, and of the aggravated Jewish school question during the first half of the century. Paris exposes Canada's harsh and restric-



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tive immigration policies which virtually barred the doors to Jewish refugees from Nazism before the Second World War. She also does well in illuminating the concerns of the Jewish community of Montreal over separatism, the election of the Partis Quebecois government and the so-called 'francization' of Quebec society. And she does not overlook some of the internal conflicts of Canada's largest Jewish community.

As indicated Paris repeats certain historical errors in her opening chapter, 'Beginnings'. For example, she attributes the barring of Jews and Huguenots from New France to the 1685 revocation of the Edict of Nantes. In fact all non-Catholics were barred from the French colony under the terms of the act under which Cardinal Richelieu first arranged to send settlers to New France in 1627.

Paris presents Captain Alexander Schomberg as an officer 'of Jewish ancestry' in the British fleet that accompanied General Wolfe to Quebec, and Aaron Hart as 'a Jew and a lieutenant in the British army' which captured Montreal in 1760. She fails to explain that Schomberg could only rise to high office in the British navy because he became a baptized Christian and Hart could not have been an army officer because he remained a practising Jew.

Her account of Ezekiel Hart's election to and expulsion from the Quebec Assembly in 1807-09 is also fallacious, particularly in regard to the claim that Governor Sir James Craig dissolved the Assembly in 1809 solely on account of efforts to pass a bill to disqualify Jews from being candidates for parliament. Moreover the petition which she suggests was presented to the Governor at this time by the Jewish community of Lower Canada, is, more likely, the one that was actually presented in 1831, leading to the adoption of the so-called Bill of Rights for the Jews.

In the second part of the book Paris writes substantively and with considerable objectivity about the Jewish left-wing movement in Toronto. It certainly falls into the category of a story that had to be told. But the vast majority of the Jewish citizens of Toronto are far removed from the left and many among them who read this book will probably wonder why Paris chose this element to write about while completely neglecting to discuss synagogue life or the Zionist. This may seem like a cavil but it is an example of improper use of available research.

What is more important is that inadequate research has led Paris to serious deficiencies in the last part of her chapter on the politics of Jewish settlement in the West and the first part of her account of the Hirsch settlement. There are many important original sources on Jewish settlement in the 1890s and early 1900s in addition to the Louis Rosenberg papers to which she appears to have largely restricted herself. As a result she has missed some of the important aspects of Jewish land settlement politics such as the refusal of Sir Wilfrid Laurier to approve the idea of an autonomous Jewish land settlement project in the West.

In the last two chapters of her book Erna Paris writes about Edenbridge which has become the best known of the Jewish farm settlements. Here she demonstrates again that she is much better in dealing with the live experiences of people she has met and interviewed than in recounting and interpreting events and developments based solely on documentary research.

Abraham Arnold is co-author, with the late William Kurelek, of 'Jewish Life in Canada'. He is also a contributing author to two forthcoming books: 'Canadian Jewish Mosaic' and 'Building the New Jerusalem on the Prairie'.

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